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THE WORKS
OF
SHAKESPEARE

VOL. X

The
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THE WORKS

OF

SHAKESPEARE

EDITED

WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES

BY

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CORIOLANUS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CAIUS MARCIUS, afterwards CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS.
TITUS LARTIUS, } generals against the Volscians.
COMINIUS, }
MENENIUS AGRIPPA, friend to Coriolanus.
SICINIUS VELUTUS, } tribunes of the people.
JUNIUS BRUTUS, }
Young MARCIUS, son to Coriolanus.
A Roman Herald.
TULLUS AUFIDIUS, general of the Volscians.
Lieutenant to Aufidius.
Conspirators with Aufidius.
A Citizen of Antium.
Two Volscian Guards.

VOLUMNIA, mother to Coriolanus.
VIRGILIA, wife to Coriolanus.
VALERIA, friend to Virgilia.
Gentlewoman, attending on Virgilia.

Roman and Volscian Senators, Patricians, Ædiles, Lictors, Soldiers, Citizens, Messengers, Servants to Aufidius, and other Attendants.

SCENE : *Rome and the neighbourhood; Corioli and the neighbourhood; Antium.*

INTRODUCTION

Coriolanus was first published in the Folio of 1623. No quarto edition ever appeared, and the text, printed directly from a MS., abounds in inaccurate punctuation and blundering verse-division.

External evidence of date is wholly wanting. There is no record of its performance, and the ingenuity of the 'Allusion' hunters has detected no further traces of its influence than an apparent reference in Fletcher's *A King and No King* (1611), and another in Jonson's *Silent Woman* (1609). But style and metre assign it clearly to the close of the tragic period, *i.e.* to the years 1608-10. The metrical innovation of 'weak endings,' first employed freely in *Antony and Cleopatra*, gains ground; extra syllables impede or complicate the flow of the line; melody is harsher and rarer; nowhere has Shakespeare's verse less of lyric manner. These changes were in part prompted by conscious art. But they were also symptoms of a decaying sense of form. Declining freshness of dramatic invention is betrayed too by the preponderance of typical traits in most of the characters. Volumnia is certainly not sufficiently defined as the typical 'Roman mother,' or even Virgilia as the 'devoted wife'; but the individual and personal traits of both are, for Shakespeare, slightly pronounced. *Coriolanus* alone among the Roman plays

has affinities with the Roman tragedies of Jonson. Its political animus is significantly easy to read: no other work of Shakespeare can be so excusably mistaken for a treatise on government. Shakespearean imagination triumphs less clearly over the raw material of biography than either in *Cæsar* or in *Antony*. We have to do with highly intellectualised prose breaking fitfully into poetry of astonishing magnificence, rather than with work fundamentally and securely poetical. All these characteristics confirm the conclusion that *Coriolanus* belongs to the closing years of the tragic period.

Shakespeare's sole source was Plutarch's *Life of Coriolanus*, as translated by North (1579). Thus Plutarch was here dealing with a story as legendary as those of *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, but steeped in sentiment quite foreign to Holinshed or Saxo. A blurred picture of the early struggles of the Republic formed the background of a patriotic myth, which represented a Roman mother saving the State by an appeal to the mercy of her son. Plutarch was the very man to do justice to this triumph of humanity over brute-force, of the tie of kinship over the passion for vengeance; and he described the great scene in Coriolanus' camp before Rome with a moving eloquence to which Shakespeare himself added little. But Volumnia's sway over Martius was purchased, in Plutarch's view, by grave defects in his upbringing. Martius is for him the type of '*a rare and excellent wit untaught*'; his '*natural wit and great heart did marvellously stir up his courage to do and attempt notable acts*'; but '*for lack of education he was so choleric and impatient that he would yield to no living creature; which made him churlish, uncivil and altogether unfit for any man's conversation.*' So, still more severely: '*He was too much given over to self-will and opinion,*

and one of a high mind and great courage, that lacked the gravity and affability that is gotten with judgment of learning and reason, which only is to be looked for in a governor of state.' The citizen was altogether absorbed in the son; for '*the only thing that made him to love honour was the joy he saw his mother did take of him.*' A temper so unsocial might have sufficed to account for Coriolanus' rupture with his countrymen. But Plutarch dwells so vindictively upon the machinations of his enemies, the tribunes, to bring it about, that the sympathy of his readers is all given to the banished man. Moreover, when allied with the enemies of Rome Coriolanus uses his power with statesmanlike moderation, demanding for his Volscian allies only admission to the Latin league and the restoration of their conquered lands,—reasonable demands, which his countrymen meet with arrogant defiance or with panic-stricken prayers for mercy.

If Plutarch's Coriolanus is of somewhat varying complexion, his description of the Roman polity abounds in inconsistencies. He regards the Roman plebs with prepossessions derived from the mob of his own time, and their victory is for him a triumph of '*the poor needy people and all such rabble as had nothing to lose and had less regard of honesty before their eyes*' over '*the noble honest citizens whose persons and purse did dutifully serve the commonwealth in their wars.*'[1] But even in the blurred tradition he followed, some traits of a different and more authentic stamp had been preserved, and he faithfully records them. Thus, at the very outset, the plebeian rabble are seen to be the military mainstay of the city, whose valour puts the nobles themselves to shame; their method of seeking redress for intolerable grievances is the peaceful retreat to the Sacred Mount—a masterstroke

[1] North, p. 284.

of sagacious self-control and disciplined civil temper. Having extorted a constitutional reform of the first importance, the creation of tribunes, they return, '*doing harm to no man*,' and the '*city grows again* to good quiet and unity.' All these facts Plutarch records; but aristocratic bias colours every detail, and he rarely speaks of the popular leaders but as 'the seditious tribunes,' or 'busy prattlers that sought the people's good-will by flattering words.'

Thus Plutarch, in his scrupulous regard for conflicting traditions, overlays the germs of tragedy which the legend clearly possessed. No such scruples impeded the art of Shakespeare. His Rome is still farther than Plutarch's from the Rome of history. He drew the Roman plebeians in the light of Plutarch's animus, and ignored the inconsistent facts embedded in his narrative. His *plebs* is a rabble, devoid of political ideas, craving nothing but bread. The retreat to the Sacred Mount resembles, in his hands, the revolt of Jack Cade, and the 'rebels' have a similar blatant communism put in their mouths. We are reminded with remorseless iteration that their caps are greasy and their breath foul. What is more, they are cowards in battle,—hares and geese where they ought to be lions and foxes. In this last point Shakespeare diverged point blank from Plutarch. His tribunes deserve Plutarch's scornful epithets even better than their prototypes. Few characters in Shakespeare less serve to illustrate his large humanity. The violent but honest party leader is still discernible in Plutarch behind the unscrupulous demagogue: Shakespeare effaces the finer traits and brings out the baser with incisive emphasis. His tribunes are more concerned for their own official authority than for the rights of the plebs whom they heartily despise: they speculate on the 'ancient malice' which will

drive his merits into oblivion on the least offence (ii. 1. 243); they attack him with vamped-up charges which impose only upon the docile herd they lead, and calculate upon his native rashness of speech to provide under that provocation the means of breaking his neck (iii. 3. 25). In Plutarch the reaction which deprived Coriolanus of the consulship is due to the cautious after-thoughts of the plebeian electors who had approved it: in Shakespeare it is the work of the sleepless jealousy of the tribunes.

Such enemies gave some pretext to Coriolanus' scorn. And Coriolanus himself stands out, in Shakespeare, yet more than in Plutarch, as a giant among pigmies. He has the surpassing excellences of the true aristocrat, and seems to embody at once the aristocratic ideals of heroic Greece and of feudal chivalry. He scorns money and pain; he has a natural eloquence always at command, and everything he says is impressed with an indefinable greatness. Less 'churlish and solitary' than in Plutarch, for Shakespeare gives him the adoring friendship of Menenius and Cominius, he is at bottom more 'uncivil,' less fit for citizenship, more impracticable in his passionate self-will. This aspect of his character Shakespeare has emphasised with a series of admirably imagined strokes. It is only in the drama that Coriolanus revolts against the traditional ceremony of displaying his wounds, and declaims, with the naïve unreason of a headstrong nature, against the authority of 'custom,' on which his own patrician privilege ultimately rested. His vengeance is far more sweeping and uncompromising. He comes to burn Rome, not to get reasonable concessions for his allies; far from 'keeping the Noble men's lands and goods safe from harm and burning,' he sternly dismisses the appeal of his noble friends for discrimina-

tion: he cannot stay to pick the few grains of wheat in a pile

Of noisome musty chaff (v. 1. 25).

Political partisanship is effaced in the fury of personal vengeance. Here and there the egoism of the aristocratic temper triumphs in a trait of sarcastic humour, as in the case of the poor man in Corioli who had befriended him and whose life he wished to save, but whose name was 'By Jupiter! forgot.' Lastly, this vehement, impracticable Coriolanus of Shakespeare is moved only by one force, with which reason has nothing to do—the passionate bond of sympathy with his mother. This fine trait, so well seized by Plutarch, is for Shakespeare also the *raison d'être* of the whole story; and he makes it plausible by a profusion of subtle psychological strokes. It is Volumnia who prevails upon her son, as candidate for the consulship (iii. 2.) as well as in the greater crisis before the walls of Rome, to be 'mild,' against his nature; and the earlier triumph prepares us for the later. A hint of Plutarch's, that 'at her desire' he took a wife, suggested the conception of Virgilia—the 'gracious silence' beside the great moving and controlling voice. Volumnia differs from her son in her keener and subtler brain. Shakespeare, as has been said, adopts almost all that Plutarch had given her to say. But her fiery outbursts and her flashes of penetration are his alone. In the great appeal-speech the Shakespearean touch is easily recognised in the fierce irony of the climax 'Come let us go: this fellow had a Volscian to his mother' (v. 3. 178 f.). In the speeches at the earlier crisis we find such strokes of penetrating criticism as

I have a heart as little apt as yours,
But yet a brain that leads my use of anger
To better vantage.

Or,

> You might have been enough the man you are,
> With striving less to be so.

It marks the comparative sobering of Shakespeare's imagination in this last of the great tragedies, that such dicta of the cool, critical judgment are finally seen to exhaust the situation. We accept for the moment Enobarbus' criticism of Antony, and Kent's of Lear; but as the tragedy deepens, a change insensibly steals over the ethical proportion of things, the verdict of the sober judgment appears of a less absolute competence, fatuity itself acquires higher faculties of vision and utterance; Lear in his frenzy and Antony in the final transports of his passion, discover their sublimest selves. But the fatuity of Coriolanus undergoes no such imaginative alchemy. He is sublime in battle, and in the final renunciation, where his mother's heroic heart beats in accord with his, and his with hers; but his stubborn refusal to distinguish between the conditions of a civic community and those of a camp, is, at bottom, stupid, and its stupidity is never felt sublime. He is bolder than the devil, but not so subtle; and his want of serpentine craft or of comprehension of it excites neither admiring pity, as in Brutus, nor tragic horror, as in Othello, but the half-amused sympathy with which we look on the blunders of a giant more brave than wise. Those critics who have spoken with least reserve of the heroic greatness of Coriolanus have admitted that 'the temper in which Shakespeare presents him is almost unsympathetic; it is surprisingly free from . . . suggestions of deep personal feeling.' Coriolanus, says Mr. Barrett Wendell, owes his fate to 'a passionate excess of inherently noble traits, whose very nobility unfits them for survival in the ignoble world about them.' He represents 'aristo-

cracy as nobly worthy of dominance as in Henry V., and yet as inexorably doomed as in Antony.' But the man who pictured Henry before Agincourt among the common soldiers hardly thought that the insolent hauteur of Coriolanus was sufficiently explained and excused by his having to lead a 'musty superfluity' of 'dissentious rogues.' The tribunes themselves are permitted to utter a palpable home-truth, when they tell him:—

> You speak o' the people,
> As if you were a god to punish, not
> A man of their infirmity.
>
> (iii. 1. 80.)

Even Coriolanus' valour is described with a fire chiefly of the imagination. The magnificent battle-poetry of this play betrays no martial enthusiasm, like that which glows so transparently in the choruses of *Henry V.* The career of Coriolanus, with his fabulous yet, in the sequel, futile valour, is a satire upon militarism; and the sublime images in which his feats are told,—he 'struck Corioli like a planet,'—'as weeds before a vessel under sail, so men obey'd and fell below his stem,'—only make the undertone of irony more explicit. Shakespeare had dared to laugh at Achilles and Ajax; but the Homeric grandeur of Coriolanus (communicated through an utterly un-Homeric style) conceals a not less bitter sense of the futilities of heroism.

CORIOLANUS

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Rome. A street.*

Enter a company of mutinous Citizens, *with staves, clubs, and other weapons.*

First Cit. Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

All. Speak, speak.

First Cit. You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?

All. Resolved, resolved.

First Cit. First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

All. We know 't, we know 't.

First Cit. Let us kill him, and we 'll have corn at our own price. Is 't a verdict?

All. No more talking on 't; let it be done: away, away!

Sec. Cit. One word, good citizens.

First Cit. We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians, good. What authority surfeits on would relieve us: if they would yield us but the superfluity while it were wholesome, we might guess

18. *guess*, consider.

they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear: the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes: for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.

Sec. Cit. Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

All. Against him first: he 's a very dog to the commonalty.

Sec. Cit. Consider you what services he has done for his country?

First Cit. Very well; and could be content to give him good report for 't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

Sec. Cit. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

First Cit. I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end: though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his mother, and to be partly proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

Sec. Cit. What he cannot help in his nature, you account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is covetous.

First Cit. If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations; he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. [*Shouts within.*] What shouts are these? The other side o' the city is risen: why stay we prating here? to the Capitol!

All. Come, come.

First Cit. Soft! who comes here?

21. *object*, spectacle.

ib. *as an inventory*, i.e. our want only serves, like an inventory of their goods, to make their wealth more manifest.

Enter Menenius Agrippa.

Sec. Cit. Worthy Menenius Agrippa; one that hath always loved the people.

First Cit. He 's one honest enough: would all the rest were so!

Men. What work 's, my countrymen, in hand? where go you
With bats and clubs? The matter? speak, I pray you.

First Cit. Our business is not unknown to the senate; they have had inkling, this fortnight, what we intend to do, which now we 'll show 'em in deeds. They say poor suitors have strong breaths: they shall know we have strong arms too.

Men. Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours,
Will you undo yourselves?

First Cit. We cannot, sir, we are undone already.

Men. I tell you, friends, most charitable care
Have the patricians of you. For your wants,
Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well
Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them
Against the Roman state; whose course will on
The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs
Of more strong link asunder than can ever
Appear in your impediment. For the dearth,
The gods, not the patricians, make it, and
Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack,
You are transported by calamity
Thither where more attends you, and you slander
The helms o' the state, who care for you like fathers,
When you curse them as enemies.

First Cit. Care for us! True, indeed! They

ne'er cared for us yet: suffer us to famish, and their store-houses crammed with grain; make edicts for usury, to support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome act established against the rich, and provide more piercing statutes daily, to chain up and restrain the poor. If the wars eat us not up, they will; and there 's all the love they bear us.

Men. Either you must
Confess yourselves wondrous malicious,
Or be accused of folly. I shall tell you
A pretty tale: it may be you have heard it;
But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture
To stale 't a little more.

First Cit. Well, I 'll hear it, sir: yet you must not think to fob off our disgrace with a tale: but, an 't please you, deliver.

Men. There was a time when all the body's members
Rebell'd against the belly; thus accused it:
That only like a gulf it did remain
I' the midst o' the body, idle and unactive,
Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing
Like labour with the rest, where the other instruments
Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,
And, mutually participate, did minister
Unto the appetite and affection common
Of the whole body. The belly answer'd—

First Cit. Well, sir, what answer made the belly?

Men. Sir, I shall tell you. With a kind of smile,
Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus—

97. *fob off*, jest away.
112. *Which ne'er came from the lungs*. The lungs were regarded as the seat of joyous laughter.

For, look you, I may make the belly smile
As well as speak—it taintingly replied
To the discontented members, the mutinous parts
That envied his receipt; even so most fitly
As you malign our senators for that
They are not such as you.
First Cit. Your belly's answer? What!
The kingly-crowned head, the vigilant eye,
The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,
Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,
With other muniments and petty helps
In this our fabric, if that they—
Men. What then?
'Fore me, this fellow speaks! What then? what then?
First Cit. Should by the cormorant belly be restrain'd,
Who is the sink o' the body,—
Men. Well, what then?
First Cit. The former agents, if they did complain,
What could the belly answer?
Men. I will tell you;
If you 'll bestow a small—of what you have little—
Patience awhile, you 'll hear the belly's answer.
First Cit. Ye 're long about it.
Men. Note me this, good friend;
Your most grave belly was deliberate,
Not rash like his accusers, and thus answer'd:
'True is it, my incorporate friends,' quoth he,
'That I receive the general food at first,

114. *taintingly.* So F_1. Most modern edd. substitute 'tauntingly,' from F_4. But the belly's reply (v. 134 f.) is not taunting, and 'taintingly' may well mean 'attaintingly,' *i.e.* indicting (them in turn).

Which you do live upon; and fit it is,
Because I am the store-house and the shop
Of the whole body: but, if you do remember,
I send it through the rivers of your blood,
Even to the court, the heart, to the seat o' the brain;
And, through the cranks and offices of man,
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
From me receive that natural competency
Whereby they live: and though that all at once,
You, my good friends,'—this says the belly, mark me,—
First Cit. Ay, sir; well, well.
Men. 'Though all at once cannot
See what I do deliver out to each,
Yet I can make my audit up, that all
From me do back receive the flour of all,
And leave me but the bran.' What say you to 't?
First Cit. It was an answer: how apply you this?
Men. The senators of Rome are this good belly,
And you the mutinous members; for examine
Their counsels and their cares, digest things rightly
Touching the weal o' the common, you shall find
No public benefit which you receive
But it proceeds or comes from them to you
And no way from yourselves. What do you think,
You, the great toe of this assembly?
First Cit. I the great toe! why the great toe?
Men. For that, being one o' the lowest, basest, poorest,
Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost:
Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,

163. *rascal*, deer unfit for hunting.
163. *in blood*, in sound condition.

Lead'st first to win some vantage.
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs:
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;
The one side must have bale.

Enter CAIUS MARCIUS.

Hail, noble Marcius!

Mar. Thanks. What's the matter, you dissentious rogues,
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
Make yourselves scabs?

First Cit. We have ever your good word.

Mar. He that will give good words to thee will flatter
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,
That like nor peace nor war? the one affrights you,
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
Where foxes, geese: you are no surer, no,
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is
To make him worthy whose offence subdues him
And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness
Deserves your hate; and your affections are
A sick man's appetite, who desires most that
Which would increase his evil. He that depends
Upon your favours swims with fins of lead
And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! Trust ye?
With every minute you do change a mind,

179. *To make him worthy*, etc., to rehabilitate the criminal justly condemned, and to execrate the justice which sentenced him.

And call him noble that was now your hate,
Him vile that was your garland. What's the matter,
That in these several places of the city
You cry against the noble senate, who,
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
Would feed on one another? What's their seeking?
Men. For corn at their own rates; whereof, they say,
The city is well stored.
Mar. Hang 'em! They say!
They 'll sit by the fire, and presume to know
What's done i' the Capitol; who's like to rise,
Who thrives and who declines; side factions and give out
Conjectural marriages; making parties strong
And feebling such as stand not in their liking
Below their cobbled shoes. They say there 's grain enough!
Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,
And let me use my sword, I 'ld make a quarry
With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high
As I could pick my lance.
Men. Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded;
For though abundantly they lack discretion,
Yet are they passing cowardly. But, I beseech you,
What says the other troop?
Mar. They are dissolved: hang 'em!
They said they were an-hungry; sigh'd forth proverbs,

197. *side factions*, take sides in factions.
202. *quarry* (a sporting term: a pile of prey living or dead), a heap of the slain.
204. *pick*, pitch, throw.

That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must eat,
That meat was made for mouths, that the gods sent not
Corn for the rich men only: with these shreds
They vented their complainings; which being answer'd,
And a petition granted them, a strange one—
To break the heart of generosity,
And make bold power look pale—they threw their caps
As they would hang them on the horns o' the moon,
Shouting their emulation.

Men. What is granted them?

Mar. Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,
Of their own choice: one 's Junius Brutus,
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not—'Sdeath!
The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,
Ere so prevail'd with me: it will in time
Win upon power and throw forth greater themes
For insurrection's arguing.

Men. This is strange.

Mar. Go, get you home, you fragments!

Enter a Messenger, *hastily.*

Mess. Where 's Caius Marcius?

Mar. Here: what 's the matter?

Mess. The news is, sir, the Volsces are in arms.

Mar. I am glad on 't: then we shall ha' means to vent
Our musty superfluity. See, our best elders.

215. *break the heart of generosity,* give the death-blow to the power of the nobles.

Enter COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, *and other* Senators; JUNIUS BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS VELUTUS.

First Sen. Marcius, 'tis true that you have lately told us;
The Volsces are in arms.
Mar. They have a leader,
Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to 't.
I sin in envying his nobility,
And were I any thing but what I am,
I would wish me only he.
Com. You have fought together?
Mar. Were half to half the world by the ears, and he
Upon my party, I 'ld revolt, to make
Only my wars with him: he is a lion
That I am proud to hunt.
First Sen. Then, worthy Marcius,
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.
Com. It is your former promise.
Mar. Sir, it is;
And I am constant. Titus Lartius, thou
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.
What, art thou stiff? stand'st out?
Tit. No, Caius Marcius;
I 'll lean upon one crutch and fight with t 'other,
Ere stay behind this business.
Men. O, true-bred!
First Sen. Your company to the Capitol; where, I know,
Our greatest friends attend us.
Tit. [*To Com.*] Lead you on.
[*To Mar.*] Follow Cominius; we must follow you;
Right worthy you priority.
Com. Noble Marcius!

245. *stiff*, stubborn.

First Sen. [*To the Citizens*] Hence to your homes; be gone!

Mar. Nay, let them follow:
The Volsces have much corn; take these rats thither
To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutiners,
Your valour puts well forth: pray, follow.

[*Citizens steal away. Exeunt all but Sicinius and Brutus.*

Sic. Was ever man so proud as is this Marcius?

Bru. He has no equal.

Sic. When we were chosen tribunes for the people,—

Bru. Mark'd you his lip and eyes?

Sic. Nay, but his taunts.

Bru. Being moved, he will not spare to gird the gods.

Sic. Be-mock the modest moon.

Bru. The present wars devour him: he is grown
Too proud to be so valiant.

Sic. Such a nature,
Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow
Which he treads on at noon: but I do wonder
His insolence can brook to be commanded
Under Cominius.

Bru. Fame, at the which he aims,
In whom already he 's well graced, can not
Better be held nor more attain'd than by
A place below the first: for what miscarries
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform
To the utmost of a man; and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Marcius 'O, if he
Had borne the business!'

Sic. Besides, if things go well,
Opinion that so sticks on Marcius shall

263. *to be*, of being.

Of his demerits rob Cominius.
Bru. Come:
Half all Cominius' honours are to Marcius,
Though Marcius earn'd them not, and all his faults
To Marcius shall be honours, though indeed
In aught he merit not.
Sic. Let's hence, and hear
How the dispatch is made, and in what fashion,
More than his singularity, he goes
Upon this present action.
Bru. Let's along. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *Corioli. The Senate-house.*

Enter Tullus Aufidius *and certain* Senators.

First Sen. So, your opinion is, Aufidius,
That they of Rome are enter'd in our counsels,
And know how we proceed.
Auf. Is it not yours?
What ever have been thought on in this state,
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome
Had circumvention? 'Tis not four days gone
Since I heard thence; these are the words: I think
I have the letter here; yes, here it is.
[*Reads*] 'They have press'd a power, but it is not known
Whether for east or west: the dearth is great;
The people mutinous: and it is rumour'd,
Cominius, Marcius your old enemy,
Who is of Rome worse hated than of you,
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,
These three lead on this preparation

276. *demerits*, desert (in a good sense).
282. *More than his singularity*, apart from his individual temperament.
2. *enter'd in*, privy to.

Whither 'tis bent: most likely 'tis for you:
Consider of it.'

First Sen. Our army 's in the field:
We never yet made doubt but Rome was ready
To answer us.

Auf. Nor did you think it folly
To keep your great pretences veil'd till when
They needs must show themselves; which in the hatching,
It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery
We shall be shorten'd in our aim, which was
To take in many towns ere almost Rome
Should know we were afoot.

Sec. Sen. Noble Aufidius,
Take your commission; hie you to your bands:
Let us alone to guard Corioli:
If they set down before 's, for the remove
Bring up your army; but, I think, you 'll find
They 've not prepared for us.

Auf. O, doubt not that;
I speak from certainties. Nay, more,
Some parcels of their power are forth already,
And only hitherward. I leave your honours.
If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,
'Tis sworn between us we shall ever strike
Till one can do no more.

All. The gods assist you!

Auf. And keep your honours safe!

First Sen. Farewell.

Sec. Sen. Farewell.

All. Farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Rome. A room in Marcius' house.*

Enter VOLUMNIA *and* VIRGILIA: *they set them down on two low stools, and sew.*

Vol. I pray you, daughter, sing; or express yourself in a more comfortable sort: if my son were my husband, I should freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he won honour than in the embracements of his bed where he would show most love. When yet he was but tender-bodied and the only son of my womb; when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze his way; when, for a day of kings' entreaties, a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding; I, considering how honour would become such a person; that it was no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir, was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him; from whence he returned, his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man.

Vir. But had he died in the business, madam: how then?

Vol. Then his good report should have been my son; I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely: had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

8. *plucked*, attracted.

16. *his brows bound with oak.* A crown of oak-leaves was the reward for saving the life of a fellow-citizen in battle.

Enter a Gentlewoman.

Gent. Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

Vir. Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.

Vol. Indeed, you shall not.
Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum;
See him pluck Aufidius down by the hair;
As children from a bear, the Volsces shunning him:
Methinks I see him stamp thus, and call thus:
'Come on, you cowards! you were got in fear,
Though you were born in Rome:' his bloody brow
With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,
Like to a harvest-man that 's task'd to mow
Or all or lose his hire.

Vir. His bloody brow! O Jupiter, no blood!

Vol. Away, you fool! it more becomes a man
Than gilt his trophy: the breasts of Hecuba,
When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier
Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood
At Grecian sword contemning. Tell Valeria,
We are fit to bid her welcome. [*Exit Gent.*

Vir. Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius!

Vol. He 'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee,
And tread upon his neck.

Enter VALERIA, *with an* Usher *and a* Gentlewoman.

Val. My ladies both, good day to you.

Vol. Sweet madam.

Vir. I am glad to see your ladyship.

Val. How do you both? you are manifest house-keepers. What are you sewing here? A

48. *bless*, protect.
54. *manifest house-keepers*, notorious stayers-at-home.

fine spot, in good faith. How does your little son?

Vir. I thank your ladyship; well, good madam.

Vol. He had rather see the swords, and hear a drum, than look upon his schoolmaster.

Val. O' my word, the father's son: I 'll swear, 'tis a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I looked upon him o' Wednesday half an hour together; has such a confirmed countenance. I saw him run after a gilded butterfly; and when he caught it, he let it go again; and after it again; and over and over he comes, and up again; catched it again; or whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth and tear it; O, I warrant, how he mammocked it!

Vol. One on 's father's moods.

Val. Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

Vir. A crack, madam.

Val. Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.

Vir. No, good madam; I will not out of doors.

Val. Not out of doors!

Vol. She shall, she shall.

Vir. Indeed, no, by your patience; I 'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars.

Val. Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably: come, you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

Vir. I will wish her speedy strength, and visit her with my prayers; but I cannot go thither.

65. *confirmed*, determined.

71. *mammocked*, tore it in pieces.

74. *crack*, a disparaging term applied to a boy.

Vol. Why, I pray you?

Vir. 'Tis not to save labour, nor that I want love.

Val. You would be another Penelope: yet, they say, all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come; I would your cambric were sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

Vir. No, good madam, pardon me; indeed, I will not forth.

Val. In truth, la, go with me; and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband.

Vir. O, good madam, there can be none yet.

Val. Verily, I do not jest with you; there came news from him last night.

Vir. Indeed, madam?

Val. In earnest, it's true; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is: the Volsces have an army forth; against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power: your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioli; they nothing doubt prevailing, and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honour; and so, I pray, go with us.

Vir. Give me excuse, good madam; I will obey you in every thing hereafter.

Vol. Let her alone, lady: as she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

Val. In troth, I think she would. Fare you well, then. Come, good sweet lady. Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemnness out o' door, and go along with us.

94. *moths.* The word was pronounced 'motts.' There is thence, apparently, a play upon the cant meaning 'lovers,' a sense still current in Ireland. The *Slang Dict.* gives 'mot,' a girl of indifferent character. L.

95. *sensible*, sensitive.

Vir. No, at a word, madam; indeed, I must not. I wish you much mirth.
Val. Well, then, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Before Corioli.*

Enter, with drum and colours, MARCIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Captains *and* Soldiers. *To them a* Messenger.

Mar. Yonder comes news. A wager they have met.
Lart. My horse to yours, no.
Mar. 'Tis done.
Lart. Agreed.
Mar. Say, has our general met the enemy?
Mess. They lie in view; but have not spoke as yet.
Lart. So, the good horse is mine.
Mar. I'll buy him of you.
Lart. No, I'll nor sell nor give him: lend you him I will
For half a hundred years. Summon the town.
Mar. How far off lie these armies?
Mess. Within this mile and half.
Mar. Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours.
Now, Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work,
That we with smoking swords may march from hence,
To help our fielded friends! Come, blow thy blast.

They sound a parley. Enter two Senators *with others on the walls.*

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

122. *at a word*, in short. 9. *'larum*, call 'to arms.'

First Sen. No, nor a man that fears you less than he,
That 's lesser than a little. [*Drums afar off.*]
Hark! our drums
Are bringing forth our youth. We 'll break our walls,
Rather than they shall pound us up: our gates,
Which yet seem shut, we have but pinn'd with rushes;
They 'll open of themselves. [*Alarum afar off.*]
Hark you, far off!
There is Aufidius; list, what work he makes
Amongst your cloven army.
Mar. O, they are at it!
Lart. Their noise be our instruction. Ladders ho!

Enter the army of the Volsces.

Mar. They fear us not, but issue forth their city.
Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight
With hearts more proof than shields. Advance, brave Titus:
They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts,
Which makes me sweat with wrath. Come on, my fellows:
He that retires, I 'll take him for a Volsce,
And he shall feel mine edge.

Alarum. The Romans *are beat back to their trenches. Re-enter* MARCIUS, *cursing.*

Mar. All the contagion of the south light on you,

14. *less*, i.e. more; through association with the cognate assertion: 'There is no man that fears you less than he.'

17. *pound us up*, enclose us.

30. *the south;* the south wind was regarded as peculiarly unwholesome.

You shames of Rome! you herd of—Boils and plagues
Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorr'd
Further than seen, and one infect another
Against the wind a mile! You souls of geese,
That bear the shapes of men, how have you run
From slaves that apes would beat! Pluto and hell!
All hurt behind; backs red, and faces pale
With flight and agued fear! Mend and charge home,
Or, by the fires of heaven, I 'll leave the foe
And make my wars on you: look to 't: come on;
If you 'll stand fast, we 'll beat them to their wives,
As they us to our trenches followed.

Another alarum. The Volsces *fly, and* MARCIUS *follows them to the gates.*

So, now the gates are ope: now prove good seconds:
'Tis for the followers fortune widens them,
Not for the fliers: mark me, and do the like.
[*Enters the gates.*

First Sol. Fool-hardiness; not I.

Sec. Sol. Nor I.
[*Marcius is shut in.*

First Sol. See, they have shut him in.

All. To the pot, I warrant him.
[*Alarum continues.*

Re-enter TITUS LARTIUS.

Lart. What is become of Marcius?

All. Slain, sir, doubtless.

31. *you herd of—Boils and plagues.* Johnson's emendation. F_1 has:— You Shames of Rome: you Heard of Byles and Plagues Plaister you o'er.

47. *pot*, melting-pot.

First Sol. Following the fliers at the very heels,
With them he enters; who, upon the sudden,
Clapp'd to their gates: he is himself alone,
To answer all the city.
Lart. O noble fellow!
Who sensibly outdares his senseless sword,
And, when it bows, stands up. Thou art left, Marcius:
A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,
Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier
Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible
Only in strokes; but, with thy grim looks and
The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,
Thou madest thine enemies shake, as if the world
Were feverous and did tremble.

Re-enter MARCIUS, *bleeding, assaulted by the enemy.*

First Sol. Look, sir.
Lart. O, 'tis Marcius!
Let 's fetch him off, or make remain alike.
[*They fight, and all enter the city.*

SCENE V. *Corioli. A street.*

Enter certain Romans, *with spoils.*

First Rom. This will I carry to Rome.
Sec. Rom. And I this.
Third Rom. A murrain on 't! I took this for silver. [*Alarum continues still afar off.*

Enter MARCIUS *and* TITUS LARTIUS *with a trumpet.*

Mar. See here these movers that do prize their hours

53. *sensibly*, having feeling. 5. *movers*, loafers (with irony).
62. *make remain;* 'make' is redundant.

At a crack'd drachma! Cushions, leaden spoons,
Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would
Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,
Ere yet the fight be done, pack up: down with them!
And hark, what noise the general makes! To him!
There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,
Piercing our Romans: then, valiant Titus, take
Convenient numbers to make good the city;
Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste
To help Cominius.

Lart. Worthy sir, thou bleed'st;
Thy exercise hath been too violent
For a second course of fight.

Mar. Sir, praise me not;
My work hath yet not warm'd me: fare you well:
The blood I drop is rather physical
Than dangerous to me: to Aufidius thus
I will appear, and fight.

Lart. Now the fair goddess, Fortune,
Fall deep in love with thee; and her great charms
Misguide thy opposers' swords! Bold gentleman,
Prosperity be thy page!

Mar. Thy friend no less
Than those she placeth highest! So, farewell.

Lart. Thou worthiest Marcius!

[*Exit Marcius.*

Go sound thy trumpet in the market-place;
Call thither all the officers o' the town,
Where they shall know our mind. Away!

[*Exeunt.*

6. *drachma*, the chief Greek coin; a trace of Shakespeare's authority, Plutarch, who commonly reckons in terms of Greek money.

7. *of a doit*, worth a farthing. The doit was a small Dutch coin.

19. *physical*, medicinal.

SCENE VI. *Near the camp of Cominius.*

Enter COMINIUS, *as it were in retire, with soldiers.*

Com. Breathe you, my friends: well fought; we are come off
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,
Nor cowardly in retire: believe me, sirs,
We shall be charged again. Whiles we have struck,
By interims and conveying gusts we have heard
The charges of our friends. Ye Roman gods!
Lead their successes as we wish our own,
That both our powers, with smiling fronts encountering,
May give you thankful sacrifice.

Enter a Messenger.

Thy news?

Mess. The citizens of Corioli have issued,
And given to Lartius and to Marcius battle:
I saw our party to their trenches driven,
And then I came away.

Com. Though thou speak'st truth,
Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is 't since?

Mess. Above an hour, my lord.

Com. 'Tis not a mile; briefly we heard their drums:
How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour,
And bring thy news so late?

Mess. Spies of the Volsces
Held me in chase, that I was forced to wheel

5. *By interims*, etc., at intervals, borne on the wind.
16. *briefly*, a short time since.
17. *confound*, spend.

Three or four miles about, else had I, sir,
Half an hour since brought my report.
Com. Who 's yonder,
That does appear as he were flay'd? O gods!
He has the stamp of Marcius; and I have
Before-time seen him thus.
Mar. [*Within*] Come I too late?
Com. The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabor
More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue
From every meaner man.

Enter MARCIUS.

Mar. Come I too late?
Com. Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,
But mantled in your own.
Mar. O, let me clip ye
In arms as sound as when I woo'd; in heart
As merry as when our nuptial day was done,
And tapers burn'd to bedward!
Com. Flower of warriors,
How is 't with Titus Lartius?
Mar. As with a man busied about decrees:
Condemning some to death, and some to exile;
Ransoming him, or pitying, threatening the other;
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,
To let him slip at will.
Com. Where is that slave
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches?
Where is he? call him hither.
Mar. Let him alone;
He did inform the truth: but for our gentlemen,
The common file—a plague! tribunes for them!—
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat as they did budge

From rascals worse than they.
Com. But how prevail'd you?
Mar. Will the time serve to tell? I do not think.
Where is the enemy? are you lords o' the field?
If not, why cease you till you are so?
Com. Marcius,
We have at disadvantage fought and did
Retire to win our purpose.
Mar. How lies their battle? know you on which side
They have placed their men of trust?
Com. As I guess, Marcius,
Their bands i' the vaward are the Antiates,
Of their best trust; o'er them Aufidius,
Their very heart of hope.
Mar. I do beseech you,
By all the battles wherein we have fought,
By the blood we have shed together, by the vows
We have made to endure friends, that you directly
Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates;
And that you not delay the present, but,
Filling the air with swords advanced and darts,
We prove this very hour.
Com. Though I could wish
You were conducted to a gentle bath
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never
Deny your asking: take your choice of those
That best can aid your action.
Mar. Those are they
That most are willing. If any such be here—
As it were sin to doubt—that love this painting
Wherein you see me smear'd; if any fear
Lesser his person than an ill report;
If any think brave death outweighs bad life,

53. *Antiates.* So Pope from Plutarch. Ff have 'Ancients.'

And that his country 's dearer than himself;
Let him alone, or so many so minded,
Wave thus, to express his disposition,
And follow Marcius.'

[*They all shout and wave their swords, take him up in their arms, and cast up their caps.*

O, me alone! make you a sword of me?
If these shows be not outward, which of you
But is four Volsces? none of you but is
Able to bear against the great Aufidius
A shield as hard as his. A certain number,
Though thanks to all, must I select from all: the rest
Shall bear the business in some other fight,
As cause will be obey'd. Please you to march;
And four shall quickly draw out my command,
Which men are best inclined.

Com. March on, my fellows:
Make good this ostentation, and you shall
Divide in all with us. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII. *The gates of Corioli.*

Titus Lartius, *having set a guard upon Corioli, going with drum and trumpet toward* Cominius *and* Caius Marcius, *enters with a* Lieutenant, *other* Soldiers, *and a* Scout.

Lart. So, let the ports be guarded: keep your duties,

76. *O, me alone! make you,* etc. The soldiers, called upon to 'wave' their swords, have proceeded to 'wave' *him*. He plays on the fact. 'Yes, make *me* your weapon indeed! Follow me up as strenuously as the hand the sword!'—This is more in keeping with the situation than to put a (?) at 'me' (with Capell), as if he jocularly asked *whether they took him for a sword.*

84. *four shall quickly,* etc., *i.e.* four officers are to pick out the best men.

As I have set them down. If I do send, dispatch
Those centuries to our aid; the rest will serve
For a short holding: if we lose the field,
We cannot keep the town.
Lieu. Fear not our care, sir.
Lart. Hence, and shut your gates upon 's.
Our guider, come; to the Roman camp conduct us.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII. *A field of battle between the Roman and the Volscian camps.*

Alarum as in battle. Enter, from opposite sides, MARCIUS *and* AUFIDIUS.

Mar. I 'll fight with none but thee; for I do hate thee
Worse than a promise-breaker.
Auf. We hate alike:
Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor
More than thy fame and envy. Fix thy foot.
Mar. Let the first budger die the other's slave,
And the gods doom him after!
Auf. If I fly, Marcius,
Holloa me like a hare.
Mar. Within these three hours, Tullus,
Alone I fought in your Corioli walls,
And made what work I pleased: 'tis not my blood
Wherein thou seest me mask'd; for thy revenge
Wrench up thy power to the highest.
Auf. Wert thou the Hector
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,

4. *thy fame and envy*, 'thy envied fame' (a 'hendiadys').
12. *the whip*, etc., the champion of your race; the Romans reckoning the Trojans their ancestors.

Thou shouldst not scape me here.

[*They fight, and certain Volsces come in the aid of Aufidius. Marcius fights till they be driven in breathless.*

Officious, and not valiant, you have shamed me
In your condemned seconds. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX. *The Roman camp.*

Flourish. Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Flourish. Enter, from one side, COMINIUS *with the* Romans; *from the other side,* MARCIUS, *with his arm in a scarf.*

Com. If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,
Thou 'ldst not believe thy deeds: but I 'll report it
Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles;
Where great patricians shall attend and shrug,
I' the end admire; where ladies shall be frighted,
And, gladly quaked, hear more; where the dull tribunes,
That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honours,
Shall say against their hearts 'We thank the gods
Our Rome hath such a soldier.'
Yet camest thou to a morsel of this feast, 10
Having fully dined before.

Enter TITUS LARTIUS, *with his power, from the pursuit.*

Lart. O general,
Here is the steed, we the caparison:
Hadst thou beheld—

Mar. Pray now, no more: my mother,

15. *condemned seconds*, damnable seconding.

Who has a charter to extol her blood,
When she does praise me grieves me. I have done
As you have done; that 's what I can; induced
As you have been; that 's for my country:
He that has but effected his good will
Hath overta'en mine act.

Com. You shall not be
The grave of your deserving; Rome must know
The value of her own: 'twere a concealment
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,
To hide your doings; and to silence that,
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,
Would seem but modest: therefore, I beseech you—
In sign of what you are, not to reward
What you have done—before our army hear me.

Mar. I have some wounds upon me, and they smart
To hear themselves remember'd.

Com. Should they not,
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,
And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses,
Whereof we have ta'en good and good store, of all
The treasure in this field achieved and city,
We render you the tenth; to be ta'en forth,
Before the common distribution, at
Your only choice.

Mar. I thank you, general;
But cannot make my heart consent to take
A bribe to pay my sword: I do refuse it;
And stand upon my common part with those
That have beheld the doing.

[*A long flourish. They all cry* 'Marcius! Marcius!' *cast up their caps and lances: Cominius and Lartius stand bare.*

14. *charter*, special privilege.

31. *tent*, to probe a wound, hence to cure.

Mar. May these same instruments, which you profane,
Never sound more! when drums and trumpets shall
I' the field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be
Made all of false-faced soothing!
When steel grows soft as the parasite's silk,
Let him be made an overture for the wars!
No more, I say! For that I have not wash'd
My nose that bled, or foil'd some debile wretch,—
Which, without note, here 's many else have done,—
You shout me forth
In acclamations hyperbolical;
As if I loved my little should be dieted
In praises sauced with lies.
Com. Too modest are you;
More cruel to your good report than grateful
To us that give you truly: by your patience,
If 'gainst yourself you be incensed, we 'll put you,
Like one that means his proper harm, in manacles,
Then reason safely with you. Therefore, be it known,
As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius
Wears this war's garland: in token of the which,
My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,
With all his trim belonging; and from this time,
For what he did before Corioli, call him,
With all the applause and clamour of the host,
CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS! Bear
The addition nobly ever!

[*Flourish. Trumpets sound, and drums.*

All. Caius Marcius Coriolanus!

Cor. I will go wash;

44. *soothing*, flattery.
46. *Let him be made an overture for the wars*, let silk (instead of steel) be made a sign of war. 'Him' is emphatic. L.

And when my face is fair, you shall perceive
Whether I blush, or no: howbeit, I thank you.
I mean to stride your steed, and at all times
To undercrest your good addition
To the fairness of my power.
Com. So, to our tent;
Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
To Rome of our success. You, Titus Lartius,
Must to Corioli back: send us to Rome
The best, with whom we may articulate,
For their own good and ours.
Lart. I shall, my lord.
Cor. The gods begin to mock me. I, that now
Refused most princely gifts, am bound to beg
Of my lord general.
Com. Take 't; 'tis yours. What is 't?
Cor. I sometime lay here in Corioli
At a poor man's house; he used me kindly:
He cried to me; I saw him prisoner;
But then Aufidius was within my view,
And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity: I request you
To give my poor host freedom.
Com. O, well begg'd!
Were he the butcher of my son, he should
Be free as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus.
Lart. Marcius, his name?
Cor. By Jupiter! forgot.
I am weary; yea, my memory is tired.
Have we no wine here?
Com. Go we to our tent:
The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time
It should be look'd to: come. [*Exeunt.*

72. *undercrest*, to wear the title as a crest. 'To justify the cognomen to the best of my ability.'

77. *articulate*, negociate for peace.

SCENE X. *The camp of the Volsces.*

A flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, *bloody, with two or three* Soldiers.

Auf. The town is ta'en!

First Sol. 'Twill be deliver'd back on good condition.

Auf. Condition!
I would I were a Roman; for I cannot,
Being a Volsce, be that I am. Condition
What good condition can a treaty find
I' the part that is at mercy? Five times, Marcius,
I have fought with thee; so often hast thou beat me;
And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter
As often as we eat. By the elements,
If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,
He's mine, or I am his: mine emulation
Hath not that honour in't it had; for where
I thought to crush him in an equal force,
True sword to sword, I'll potch at him some way
Or wrath or craft may get him.

First Sol. He's the devil.

Auf. Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour's poison'd
With only suffering stain by him; for him
Shall fly out of itself: nor sleep nor sanctuary,
Being naked, sick, nor fane nor Capitol,
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,
Embarguements all of fury, shall lift up

2. *good condition*, good terms.

15. *potch*, thrust.

22. *Embarguements* ('embargos'), impediments. The word seems to be suggested by the Sp. 'embargamientos' in the same sense. The vulgate 'embarquements' is an easy corruption. L.

Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst
My hate to Marcius: where I find him, were it
At home, upon my brother's guard, even there,
Against the hospitable canon, would I
Wash my fierce hand in 's heart. Go you to the
city;
Learn how 'tis held; and what they are that must
Be hostages for Rome.
First Sol. Will not you go?
Auf. I am attended at the cypress grove: I
pray you—
'Tis south the city mills—bring me word thither
How the world goes, that to the pace of it
I may spur on my journey.
First Sol. I shall, sir.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Rome. A public place.*

Enter MENENIUS *with the two Tribunes of the people,* SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS.

Men. The augurer tells me we shall have news to-night.

Bru. Good or bad?

Men. Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Marcius.

Sic. Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

31. In 1588 four corn mills were built on the south side of the Thames by the Corporation of London, close to the Globe Theatre.

Men. Pray you, who does the wolf love?

Sic. The lamb.

Men. Ay, to devour him; as the hungry plebeians would the noble Marcius.

Bru. He's a lamb indeed, that baes like a bear.

Men. He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb. You two are old men: tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

Both. Well, sir.

Men. In what enormity is Marcius poor in, that you two have not in abundance?

Bru. He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all.

Sic. Especially in pride.

Bru. And topping all others in boasting.

Men. This is strange now: do you two know how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' the right-hand file? do you?

Both. Why, how are we censured?

Men. Because you talk of pride now,—will you not be angry?

Both. Well, well, sir, well.

Men. Why, 'tis no great matter; for a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience: give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud?

Bru. We do it not alone, sir.

Men. I know you can do very little alone; for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single: your abilities are too infant-like for doing much alone. You talk of pride: O that you could turn your eyes toward

40. *single*, paltry, insignificant.

the napes of your necks, and make but an interior survey of your good selves! O that you could!

Bru. What then, sir?

Men. Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, alias fools, as any in Rome.

Sic. Menenius, you are known well enough too.

Men. I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't; said to be something imperfect in favouring the first complaint; hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion; one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the forehead of the morning: what I think I utter, and spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such wealsmen as you are—I cannot call you Lycurguses—if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I can't say your worships have delivered the matter well, when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables: and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it that I am known well enough too? what harm can your bisson conspectuities

51. *humorous*, capricious.

64. *the ass in compound*, etc., an element of the fool in all you say.

68. According to the theory of the early Mystic philosophers, man was a microcosm or epitome of creation; and the universe a macrocosm, or man on a grand scale. Bacon (*Ad. of Learning*, bk. ii.) mentions 'the ancient opinion that man was *microcosmus*, an abstract or model of the world.'

70. *bisson conspectuities*, purblind eyes. 'Conspectuities' is a coinage of Menenius'.

glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too?

Bru. Come, sir, come, we know you well enough.

Men. You know neither me, yourselves, nor any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs: you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller; and then rejourn the controversy of three pence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinched with the colic, you make faces like mummers; set up the bloody flag against all patience; and, in roaring for a chamber-pot, dismiss the controversy bleeding, the more entangled by your hearing: all the peace you make in their cause is, calling both the parties knaves. You are a pair of strange ones.

Bru. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in the Capitol.

Men. Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors since Deucalion; though peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. God-den to your worships: more of your conversation would

79. *fosset-seller*, seller of faucets or wine-taps.

102. *Deucalion*, the 'Noah' of classical legend.

infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians: I will be bold to take my leave of you.

[*Brutus and Sicinius go aside.*

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *and* VALERIA.

How now, my as fair as noble ladies,—and the moon, were she earthly, no nobler,—whither do you follow your eyes so fast?

Vol. Honourable Menenius, my boy Marcius approaches; for the love of Juno, let's go.

Men. Ha! Marcius coming home!

Vol. Ay, worthy Menenius; and with most prosperous approbation.

Men. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee. Hoo! Marcius coming home!

Vol. Vir. Nay, 'tis true.

Vol. Look, here's a letter from him: the state hath another, his wife another; and, I think, there's one at home for you.

Men. I will make my very house reel to-night: a letter for me!

Vir. Yes, certain, there's a letter for you; I saw't.

Men. A letter for me! it gives me an estate of seven years' health; in which time I will make a lip at the physician: the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiricutic, and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse-drench. Is he not wounded? he was wont to come home wounded.

Vir. O, no, no, no.

Vol. O, he is wounded; I thank the gods for't.

Men. So do I too, if it be not too much: brings a' victory in his pocket? the wounds become him.

128. *empiricutic*, quackish; again Menenius' coinage.

Vol. On's brows: Menenius, he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

Men. Has he disciplined Aufidius soundly?

Vol. Titus Lartius writes, they fought together, but Aufidius got off.

Men. And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that: an he had stayed by him, I would not have been so fidiused for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possessed of this?

Vol. Good ladies, let's go. Yes, yes, yes; the senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war: he hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly.

Val. In troth, there's wondrous things spoke of him.

Men. Wondrous! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

Vir. The gods grant them true!

Vol. True! pow, wow.

Men. True! I'll be sworn they are true. Where is he wounded? [*To the Tribunes*] God save your good worships! Marcius is coming home: he has more cause to be proud. Where is he wounded?

Vol. I' the shoulder and i' the left arm: there will be large cicatrices to show the people, when he shall stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i' the body.

Men. One i' the neck, and two i' the thigh, —there's nine that I know.

Vol. He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

Men. Now it's twenty-seven: every gash was an enemy's grave. [*A shout and flourish.*] Hark! the trumpets.

Vol. These are the ushers of Marcius: before him he carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears:
Death, that dark spirit, in 's nervy arm doth lie;
Which, being advanced, declines, and then men die.

A sennet. Trumpets sound. Enter COMINIUS *the general, and* TITUS LARTIUS; *between them,* CORIOLANUS, *crowned with an oaken garland; with* Captains *and* Soldiers, *and a* Herald.

Her. Know, Rome, that all alone Marcius did fight
Within Corioli gates: where he hath won,
With fame, a name to Caius Marcius; these
In honour follows Coriolanus.
Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus!
[*Flourish.*

All. Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus!

Cor. No more of this; it does offend my heart:
Pray now, no more.

Com. Look, sir, your mother!

Cor. O,
You have, I know, petition'd all the gods
For my prosperity! [*Kneels.*

Vol. Nay, my good soldier, up;
My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and
By deed-achieving honour newly named,—
What is it?—Coriolanus must I call thee?—
But, O, thy wife!

Cor. My gracious silence, hail!
Wouldst thou have laugh'd had I come coffin'd home,
That weep'st to see me triumph? Ah, my dear,

177. *nervy,* sinewy.

Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,
And mothers that lack sons.
Men. Now, the gods crown thee!
Cor. And live you yet? [*To Valeria*] O my sweet lady, pardon.
Vol. I know not where to turn: O, welcome home:
And welcome, general: and ye 're welcome all.
Men. A hundred thousand welcomes. I could weep
And I could laugh, I am light and heavy. Welcome.
A curse begin at very root on 's heart,
That is not glad to see thee! You are three
That Rome should dote on: yet, by the faith of men,
We have some old crab-trees here at home that will not
Be grafted to your relish. Yet welcome, warriors:
We call a nettle but a nettle and
The faults of fools but folly.
Com. Ever right.
Cor. Menenius ever, ever.
Herald. Give way there, and go on!
Cor. [*To Volumnia and Virgilia*] Your hand, and yours:
Ere in our own house I do shade my head,
The good patricians must be visited;
From whom I have received not only greetings,
But with them change of honours.
Vol. I have lived
To see inherited my very wishes
And the buildings of my fancy: only
There 's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.
Cor. Know, good mother,
I had rather be their servant in my way

Than sway with them in theirs.

Com. On, to the Capitol!

[*Flourish. Cornets. Exeunt in state, as before. Brutus and Sicinius come forward.*

Bru. All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights
Are spectacled to see him: your prattling nurse
Into a rapture lets her baby cry
While she chats him: the kitchen malkin pins
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,
Clambering the walls to eye him: stalls, bulks, windows,
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges horsed
With variable complexions, all agreeing
In earnestness to see him: seld-shown flamens
Do press among the popular throngs and puff
To win a vulgar station: our veil'd dames
Commit the war of white and damask in
Their nicely-gawded cheeks to the wanton spoil
Of Phœbus' burning kisses: such a pother
As if that whatsoever god who leads him
Were slily crept into his human powers
And gave him graceful posture.

Sic. On the sudden,
I warrant him consul.

Bru. Then our office may,
During his power, go sleep.

Sic. He cannot temperately transport his honours
From where he should begin and end, but will
Lose those he hath won.

223. *rapture*, fit.
224. *malkin*, wench.
225. *lockram*, coarse linen.
ib. *reechy*, grimy.
229. *seld-shown flamens*; the flamens were priests dedicated to the service of a particular deity, and seen only on rare ceremonial occasions.
233. *nicely-gawded*, daintily arrayed.

Bru. In that there 's comfort.
Sic. Doubt not
The commoners, for whom we stand, but they
Upon their ancient malice will forget
With the least cause these his new honours, which
That he will give them make I as little question
As he is proud to do 't.
Bru. I heard him swear,
Were he to stand for consul, never would he
Appear i' the market-place nor on him put
The napless vesture of humility,
Nor, showing, as the manner is, his wounds
To the people, beg their stinking breaths.
Sic. 'Tis right.
Bru. It was his word: O, he would miss it rather
Than carry it but by the suit of the gentry to him
And the desire of the nobles.
Sic. I wish no better
Than have him hold that purpose and to put it
In execution.
Bru. 'Tis most like he will.
Sic. It shall be to him then as our good wills,
A sure destruction.
Bru. So it must fall out
To him or our authorities. For an end,
We must suggest the people in what hatred
He still hath held them; that to 's power he would
Have made them mules, silenced their pleaders and
Dispropertied their freedoms, holding them,
In human action and capacity,
Of no more soul nor fitness for the world

250. *The napless vesture of humility;* this refers to the 'custom,' described by Plutarch, for suitors to wear a single garment only. Cf. note, ii. 2. 140.
250. *napless*, threadbare.

Than camels in the war, who have their provand
Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows
For sinking under them.
Sic. This, as you say, suggested
At some time when his soaring insolence
Shall touch the people—which time shall not want,
If he be put upon 't; and that 's as easy
As to set dogs on sheep—will be his fire
To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze
Shall darken him for ever.

Enter a Messenger.

Bru. What 's the matter?
Mess. You are sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought
That Marcius shall be consul:
I have seen the dumb men throng to see him and
The blind to hear him speak: matrons flung gloves,
Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchers,
Upon him as he pass'd: the nobles bended,
As to Jove's statue, and the commons made
A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts:
I never saw the like.
Bru. Let 's to the Capitol;
And carry with us ears and eyes for the time,
But hearts for the event.
Sic. Have with you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. The Capitol.*

Enter two Officers, *to lay cushions.*

First Off. Come, come, they are almost here. How many stand for consulships?

267. *provand*, provender.

Sec. Off. Three, they say: but 'tis thought of every one Coriolanus will carry it.

First Off. That's a brave fellow; but he's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people.

Sec. Off. Faith, there have been many great men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them; and there be many that they have loved, they know not wherefore: so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground: therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition; and out of his noble carelessness lets them plainly see 't.

First Off. If he did not care whether he had their love or no, he waved indifferently 'twixt doing them neither good nor harm: but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him, and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love.

Sec. Off. He hath deserved worthily of his country: and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonneted, without any further deed to have them at all into their estimation and report: but he hath so planted his honours in their eyes, and his actions in their hearts, that for their tongues to be silent, and not confess so much, were a kind of ingrateful injury; to report otherwise, were a malice, that,

19. *he waved*, he would wave.
23. *discover*, prove.
30. *bonneted*, saluted.
31. *have*, get.

giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it.

First Off. No more of him; he's a worthy man: make way, they are coming.

A sennet. Enter, with Lictors *before them,* COMINIUS *the consul,* MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, Senators, SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS. *The* Senators *take their places; the* Tribunes *take their places by themselves.* CORIOLANUS *stands.*

Men. Having determined of the Volsces and
To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,
As the main point of this our after-meeting,
To gratify his noble service that
Hath thus stood for his country: therefore, please you,
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire
The present consul, and last general
In our well-found successes, to report
A little of that worthy work perform'd
By Caius Marcius Coriolanus, whom
We met here both to thank and to remember
With honours like himself.

First Sen. Speak, good Cominius:
Leave nothing out for length, and make us think
Rather our state's defective for requital
Than we to stretch it out. [*To the Tribunes*] Masters o' the people,
We do request your kindest ears, and after,
Your loving motion toward the common body,
To yield what passes here.

Sic. We are convented
Upon a pleasing treaty, and have hearts
Inclinable to honour and advance
The theme of our assembly.

Bru. Which the rather

We shall be blest to do, if he remember
A kinder value of the people than
He hath hereto prized them at.
Men. That 's off, that 's off;
I would you rather had been silent. Please you
To hear Cominius speak?
Bru. Most willingly;
But yet my caution was more pertinent
Than the rebuke you give it.
Men. He loves your people;
But tie him not to be their bedfellow.
Worthy Cominius, speak. [*Coriolanus offers to go away.*] Nay, keep your place.
First Sen. Sit, Coriolanus; never shame to hear
What you have nobly done.
Cor. Your honours' pardon:
I had rather have my wounds to heal again
Than hear say how I got them.
Bru. Sir, I hope
My words disbench'd you not.
Cor. No, sir: yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.
You soothed not, therefore hurt not: but your people,
I love them as they weigh.
Men. Pray now, sit down.
Cor. I had rather have one scratch my head i' the sun
When the alarum were struck than idly sit
To hear my nothings monster'd. [*Exit.*
Men. Masters of the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter—
That 's thousand to one good one—when you now see
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour
Than one on 's ears to hear it? Proceed, Cominius.

Com. I shall lack voice: the deeds of Coriolanus
Should not be utter'd feebly. It is held
That valour is the chiefest virtue, and
Most dignifies the haver: if it be,
The man I speak of cannot in the world
Be singly counterpoised. At sixteen years,
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others: our then dictator,
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight,
When with his Amazonian chin he drove
The bristled lips before him: he bestrid
An o'er-press'd Roman and i' the consul's view
Slew three opposers: Tarquin's self he met,
And struck him on his knee: in that day's feats,
When he might act the woman in the scene,
He proved best man i' the field, and for his meed
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age
Man-enter'd thus, he waxed like a sea,
And in the brunt of seventeen battles since
He lurch'd all swords of the garland. For this last,
Before and in Corioli, let me say,
I cannot speak him home: he stopp'd the fliers;
And by his rare example made the coward
Turn terror into sport: as weeds before
A vessel under sail, so men obey'd
And fell below his stem: his sword, death's stamp,
Where it did mark, it took; from face to foot
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
Was timed with dying cries: alone he enter'd
The mortal gate of the city, which he painted
With shunless destiny; aidless came off,
And with a sudden re-inforcement struck
Corioli like a planet: now all 's his:

92. *made a head for*, led an army against.
105. *lurch'd*, deprived.
115. *mortal;* i.e. to any one who entered it alone,—in the thought of those who looked on.
116. *shunless*, inevitable.

When, by and by, the din of war gan pierce
His ready sense; then straight his doubled spirit
Re-quicken'd what in flesh was fatigate,
And to the battle came he; where he did
Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if
'Twere a perpetual spoil: and till we call'd
Both field and city ours, he never stood
To ease his breast with panting.

Men. Worthy man!

First Sen. He cannot but with measure fit the honours
Which we devise him.

Com. Our spoils he kick'd at,
And look'd upon things precious as they were
The common muck of the world: he covets less
Than misery itself would give; rewards
His deeds with doing them, and is content
To spend the time to end it.

Men. He 's right noble:
Let him be call'd for.

First Sen. Call Coriolanus.

Off. He doth appear.

Re-enter CORIOLANUS.

Men. The senate, Coriolanus, are well pleased
To make thee consul.

Cor. I do owe them still
My life and services.

Men. It then remains
That you do speak to the people.

Cor. I do beseech you,
Let me o'erleap that custom, for I cannot

140. *that custom.* Plutarch tells that suitors went in a *toga* — the principal and peculiarly Roman garment — without a *tunica*, or woollen sleeveless undergarment. North translated Amyot's rendering of this, 'un robbe simple, sans saye dessoules,' by 'a simple gown . . . without any coat under it.'

Put on the gown, stand naked and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage: please
you
That I may pass this doing.
Sic. Sir, the people
Must have their voices; neither will they bate
One jot of ceremony.
Men. Put them not to 't:
Pray you, go fit you to the custom and
Take to you, as your predecessors have,
Your honour with your form.
Cor. It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people.
Bru. Mark you that? 150
Cor. To brag unto them, thus I did, and thus;
Show them the unaching scars which I should hide,
As if I had received them for the hire
Of their breath only!
Men. Do not stand upon 't.
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them: and to our noble consul
Wish we all joy and honour.
Senators. To Coriolanus come all joy and
honour! [*Flourish of cornets. Exeunt all
but Sicinius and Brutus.*
Bru. You see how he intends to use the people.
Sic. May they perceive 's intent! He will
require them, 160
As if he did contemn what he requested
Should be in them to give.
Bru. Come, we 'll inform them
Of our proceedings here: on the market-place,
I know, they do attend us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same. The Forum.*

Enter seven or eight Citizens.

First Cit. Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

Sec. Cit. We may, sir, if we will.

Third Cit. We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do; for if he show us his wounds and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them; so, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful, were to make a monster of the multitude; of the which we being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

First Cit. And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

Third Cit. We have been called so of many; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some abram, some bald, but that our wits are so diversely coloured: and truly I think if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south, and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' the compass.

Sec. Cit. Think you so? Which way do you judge my wit would fly?

Third Cit. Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's will; 'tis strongly wedged

1. *Once*, once for all. 21. *abram*, auburn.

up in a block-head, but if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

Sec. Cit. Why that way?

Third Cit. To lose itself in a fog, where being three parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience sake, to help to get thee a wife.

Sec. Cit. You are never without your tricks: you may, you may.

Third Cit. Are you all resolved to give your voices? But that 's no matter, the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never a worthier man.

Enter CORIOLANUS *in a gown of humility, with* MENENIUS.

Here he comes, and in the gown of humility: mark his behaviour. We are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He 's to make his requests by particulars; wherein every one of us has a single honour, in giving him our own voices with our own tongues: therefore follow me, and I 'll direct you how you shall go by him.

All. Content, content. [*Exeunt Citizens.*

Men. O sir, you are not right: have you not known
The worthiest men have done 't?

Cor. What must I say?
'I pray, sir,'—Plague upon 't! I cannot bring
My tongue to such a pace:—'Look, sir, my wounds!
I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roar'd and ran

48. *by particulars*, to each of us individually.

From the noise of our own drums.'

Men. O me, the gods! 60
You must not speak of that: you must desire them
To think upon you.

Cor. Think upon me! hang 'em!
I would they would forget me, like the virtues
Which our divines lose by 'em.

Men. You'll mar all:
I'll leave you: pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,
In wholesome manner. [*Exit.*

Cor. Bid them wash their faces
And keep their teeth clean. [*Re-enter two of the Citizens.*] So, here comes a brace.
[*Re-enter a Third Citizen.*]
You know the cause, sir, of my standing here.

Third Cit. We do, sir; tell us what hath brought you to 't. 70

Cor. Mine own desert.

Sec. Cit. Your own desert!

Cor. Ay, but not mine own desire.

Third Cit. How not your own desire?

Cor. No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet to trouble the poor with begging.

Third Cit. You must think, if we give you any thing, we hope to gain by you.

Cor. Well then, I pray, your price o' the consulship? 80

First Cit. The price is to ask it kindly.

Cor. Kindly! Sir, I pray, let me ha 't: I have wounds to show you, which shall be yours in private. Your good voice, sir; what say you?

Sec. Cit. You shall ha 't, worthy sir.

Cor. A match, sir. There 's in all two worthy voices begged. I have your alms: adieu.

64. *lose by 'em*, i.e. preach to them in vain.

73. F_3 and F_4 print *not* for F_1 *but*.

Third Cit. But this is something odd.

Sec. Cit. An 'twere to give again,—but 'tis no matter. [*Exeunt the three Citizens.*

Re-enter two other Citizens.

Cor. Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of your voices that I may be consul, I have here the customary gown.

Fourth Cit. You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

Cor. Your enigma?

Fourth Cit. You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends; you have not indeed loved the common people.

Cor. You should account me the more virtuous that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them; 'tis a condition they account gentle: and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod and be off to them most counterfeitly; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man and give it bountiful to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you, I may be consul.

Fifth Cit. We hope to find you our friend; and therefore give you our voices heartily.

Fourth Cit. You have received many wounds for your country.

Cor. I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble you no farther.

102. *sworn brother;* an allusion to the mediæval institution 'fratres jurati'—comrades who swore to share all fortunes, good and ill. Cf. *Hen. V.* ii. 1. 13 *Rich. II.* v. 1. 20, etc.

Both Cit. The gods give you joy, sir, heartily!
[*Exeunt.*

Cor. Most sweet voices!
Better it is to die, better to starve,
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
Why in this woolvish toge should I stand here,
To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,
Their needless vouches? Custom calls me to 't:
What custom wills, in all things should we do 't,
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
And mountainous error be too highly heapt
For truth to o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,
Let the high office and the honour go
To one that would do thus. I am half through;
The one part suffer'd, the other will I do.

Re-enter three Citizens *more.*

Here come moe voices.
Your voices: for your voices I have fought;
Watch'd for your voices; for your voices bear
Of wounds two dozen odd; battles thrice six
I have seen and heard of; for your voices have
Done many things, some less, some more: your voices:
Indeed, I would be consul.

Sixth Cit. He has done nobly, and cannot go without any honest man's voice.

Seventh Cit. Therefore let him be consul: the gods give him joy, and make him good friend to the people!

All Cit. Amen, amen. God save thee, noble consul! [*Exeunt.*

Cor. Worthy voices!

122. *woolvish toge*, probably with the suggestion that he is a sort of 'wolf in sheep's clothing,' a warrior in the sheepish garment of peace. L.

124. *vouches*, votes.

Re-enter MENENIUS, *with* BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS.

Men. You have stood your limitation; and the tribunes
Endue you with the people's voice: remains
That, in the official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the senate.
Cor. Is this done?
Sic. The custom of request you have discharged:
The people do admit you, and are summon'd
To meet anon, upon your approbation.
Cor. Where? at the senate-house?
Sic. There, Coriolanus.
Cor. May I change these garments?
Sic. You may, sir.
Cor. That I'll straight do; and, knowing myself again,
Repair to the senate-house.
Men. I'll keep you company. Will you along?
Bru. We stay here for the people.
Sic. Fare you well.
[*Exeunt Coriolanus and Menenius.*
He has it now, and by his looks methinks
'Tis warm at 's heart.
Bru. With a proud heart he wore his humble weeds.
Will you dismiss the people?

Re-enter Citizens.

Sic. How now, my masters! have you chose this man?
First Cit. He has our voices, sir.
Bru. We pray the gods he may deserve your loves.
Sec. Cit. Amen, sir: to my poor unworthy notice,

He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.
Third Cit. Certainly
He flouted us downright.
First Cit. No, 'tis his kind of speech: he did not mock us.
Sec. Cit. Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says
He used us scornfully: he should have show'd us
His marks of merit, wounds received for 's country.
Sic. Why, so he did, I am sure.
Citizens. No, no; no man saw 'em.
Third Cit. He said he had wounds, which he could show in private;
And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,
'I would be consul,' says he: 'aged custom,
But by your voices, will not so permit me;
Your voices therefore.' When we granted that,
Here was 'I thank you for your voices: thank you:
Your most sweet voices: now you have left your voices,
I have no further with you.' Was not this mockery?
Sic. Why either were you ignorant to see 't,
Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness
To yield your voices?
Bru. Could you not have told him
As you were lesson'd, when he had no power,
But was a petty servant to the state,
He was your enemy; ever spake against
Your liberties and the charters that you bear
I' the body of the weal; and how, arriving
A place of potency and sway o' the state,
If he should still malignantly remain
Fast foe to the plebeii, your voices might
Be curses to yourselves? You should have said

That as his worthy deeds did claim no less
Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature
Would think upon you for your voices and
Translate his malice towards you into love,
Standing your friendly lord.
Sic. Thus to have said,
As you were fore-advised, had touch'd his spirit
And tried his inclination; from him pluck'd
Either his gracious promise, which you might,
As cause had call'd you up, have held him to;
Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,
Which easily endures not article
Tying him to aught; so putting him to rage,
You should have ta'en the advantage of his choler
And pass'd him unelected.
Bru. Did you perceive
He did solicit you in free contempt
When he did need your loves; and do you think
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you
When he hath power to crush? Why, had your bodies
No heart among you? or had you tongues to cry
Against the rectorship of judgement?
Sic. Have you,
Ere now, denied the asker? and now again
Of him that did not ask but mock, bestow
Your sued-for tongues?
Third Cit. He's not confirm'd; we may deny him yet.
Sec. Cit. And will deny him:
I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.
First Cit. I twice five hundred and their friends to piece 'em.
Bru. Get you hence instantly, and tell those friends,

199. *touch'd*, tested.

They have chose a consul that will from them take
Their liberties; make them of no more voice
Than dogs that are as often beat for barking
As therefore kept to do so.
Sic. Let them assemble,
And on a safer judgement all revoke
Your ignorant election: enforce his pride,
And his old hate unto you: besides, forget not
With what contempt he wore the humble weed,
How in his suit he scorn'd you: but your loves,
Thinking upon his services, took from you
The apprehension of his present portance,
Which most gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion
After the inveterate hate he bears you.
Bru. Lay
A fault on us, your tribunes; that we labour'd,
No impediment between, but that you must
Cast your election on him.
Sic. Say, you chose him
More after our commandment than as guided
By your own true affections; and that your minds,
Pre-occupied with what you rather must do
Than what you should, made you against the grain
To voice him consul: lay the fault on us.
Bru. Ay, spare us not. Say we read lectures to you,
How youngly he began to serve his country,
How long continued; and what stock he springs of:
The noble house o' the Marcians, from whence came
That Ancus Marcius, Numa's daughter's son,
Who, after great Hostilius, here was king;
Of the same house Publius and Quintus were,
That our best water brought by conduits hither;

227. *enforce*, lay stress upon. 239. *affections*, inclinations.

And nobly named, so twice being Censor,
Was his great ancestor.
Sic. One thus descended,
That hath beside well in his person wrought
To be set high in place, we did commend
To your remembrances: but you have found,
Scaling his present bearing with his past,
That he 's your fixed enemy, and revoke
Your sudden approbation.
Bru. Say, you ne'er had done 't—
Harp on that still—but by our putting on:
And presently, when you have drawn your number,
Repair to the Capitol.
All. We will so: almost all
Repent in their election. [*Exeunt Citizens.*
Bru. Let them go on;
This mutiny were better put in hazard,
Than stay, past doubt, for greater:
If, as his nature is, he fall in rage
With their refusal, both observe and answer
The vantage of his anger.
Sic. To the Capitol, come:
We will be there before the stream o' the people;
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,
Which we have goaded onward. [*Exeunt.*

251. Many emendations have been suggested, and the Camb. edd. reconstruct the sentence, making two lines of it. Prof. Littledale proposes a comma at 'being,' which gives a harsh, but possible, sense. His ancestor was a Censorinus.

256. *Scaling*, weighing.

259. *putting on*, instigation.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Rome. A street.*

Cornets. *Enter* CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, *all the Gentry*, COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, *and other* Senators.

Cor. Tullus Aufidius then had made new head?
Lart. He had, my lord; and that it was which caused
Our swifter composition.
Cor. So then the Volsces stand but as at first,
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road
Upon 's again.
Com. They are worn, lord consul, so,
That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.
Cor. Saw you Aufidius?
Lart. On safe-guard he came to me; and did curse
Against the Volsces, for they had so vilely
Yielded the town: he is retired to Antium.
Cor. Spoke he of me?
Lart. He did, my lord.
Cor. How? what?
Lart. How often he had met you, sword to sword;
That of all things upon the earth he hated
Your person most; that he would pawn his fortunes
To hopeless restitution, so he might
Be call'd your vanquisher.

6. *worn*, worn out.

Cor. At Antium lives he?
Lart. At Antium.
Cor. I wish I had a cause to seek him there,
To oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home.

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS.

Behold, these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o' the common mouth: I do despise them;
For they do prank them in authority,
Against all noble sufferance.
Sic. Pass no further.
Cor. Ha! what is that?
Bru. It will be dangerous to go on: no further.
Cor. What makes this change?
Men. The matter?
Com. Hath he not pass'd the noble and the common?
Bru. Cominius, no.
Cor. Have I had children's voices?
First Sen. Tribunes, give way; he shall to the market-place.
Bru. The people are incensed against him.
Sic. Stop,
Or all will fall in broil.
Cor. Are these your herd?
Must these have voices, that can yield them now
And straight disclaim their tongues? What are your offices?
You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?
Have you not set them on?
Men. Be calm, be calm.
Cor. It is a purposed thing, and grows by plot,
To curb the will of the nobility:
Suffer 't, and live with such as cannot rule

Nor ever will be ruled.

Bru. Call 't not a plot:
The people cry you mock'd them; and of late,
When corn was given them gratis, you repined;
Scandal'd the suppliants for the people, call'd them
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

Cor. Why, this was known before.

Bru. Not to them all.

Cor. Have you inform'd them sithence?

Bru. How! I inform them!

Com. You are like to do such business.

Bru. Not unlike,
Each way, to better yours.

Cor. Why then should I be consul? By yond clouds,
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me
Your fellow tribune.

Sic. You show too much of that
For which the people stir: if you will pass
To where you are bound, you must inquire your way,
Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit,
Or never be so noble as a consul,
Nor yoke with him for tribune.

Men. Let 's be calm.

Com. The people are abused; set on. This paltering
Becomes not Rome, nor has Coriolanus
Deserved this so dishonour'd rub, laid falsely
I' the plain way of his merit.

Cor. Tell me of corn!
This was my speech, and I will speak 't again—

Men. Not now, not now.

58. *abused*, deceived.
60. *rub*, check (properly, at bowls, an impediment which deflected the bowl from its course).

First Sen. Not in this heat, sir, now.
Cor. Now, as I live, I will. My nobler friends,
I crave their pardons:
For the mutable, rank-scented many, let them
Regard me as I do not flatter, and
Therein behold themselves: I say again,
In soothing them, we nourish 'gainst our senate
The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,
Which we ourselves have plough'd for, sow'd, and scatter'd,
By mingling them with us, the honour'd number,
Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that
Which they have given to beggars.
Men. Well, no more.
First Sen. No more words, we beseech you.
Cor. How! no more!
As for my country I have shed my blood,
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs
Coin words till their decay against those measles,
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought
The very way to catch them.
Bru. You speak o' the people,
As if you were a god to punish, not
A man of their infirmity.
Sic. 'Twere well
We let the people know 't.
Men. What, what? his choler?
Cor. Choler!
Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,
By Jove, 'twould be my mind!
Sic. It is a mind
That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further.
Cor. Shall remain!

70. *cockle*, the corn-cockle, a common weed in corn-fields.
79. *tetter*, cover as with a skin disease.

Hear you this Triton of the minnows? mark you
His absolute 'shall'?
Com. 'Twas from the canon.
Cor. 'Shall'! 90
O good but most unwise patricians! why,
You grave but reckless senators, have you thus
Given Hydra here to choose an officer,
That with his peremptory 'shall,' being but
The horn and noise o' the monster's, wants not spirit
To say he 'll turn your current in a ditch,
And make your channel his? If he have power,
Then vail your ignorance; if none, awake
Your dangerous lenity. If you are learn'd,
Be not as common fools; if you are not, 100
Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians,
If they be senators: and they are no less,
When, both your voices blended, the great'st taste
Most palates theirs. They choose their magistrate,
And such a one as he, who puts his 'shall,'
His popular 'shall,' against a graver bench
Than ever frown'd in Greece. By Jove himself!
It makes the consuls base! and my soul aches
To know, when two authorities are up,
Neither supreme, how soon confusion 110

89. *Triton*, Neptune's trumpeter, was powerful among the sea-gods, calming the ocean at his own pleasure.

90. *from the canon*, an infraction of the rule; the tribunes have acted *ultra vires* in declaring what is to be, without the consent of the people.

93. *Hydra*, the 'many-headed multitude.' The 'Hydra' was a monster with many heads, inhabiting the low lands about Lake Lerna. It was slain by Hercules.

98. *vail your ignorance*, drop your idle pretensions.

103. *When the great'st taste most palates theirs*, when the predominant taste is adapted to their palate.

110. It has been remarked that there was never a constitution which looks more unworkable on paper than the Roman. But the Romans had a genius for government, which prevented deadlocks.

May enter 'twixt the gap of both and take
The one by the other.
Com. Well, on to the market-place.
Cor. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth
The corn o' the storehouse gratis, as 'twas used
Sometime in Greece,—
Men. Well, well, no more of that.
Cor. Though there the people had more absolute power,
I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed
The ruin of the state.
Bru. Why, shall the people give
One that speaks thus their voice?
Cor. I 'll give my reasons,
More worthier than their voices. They know the corn
Was not our recompense, resting well assured
They ne'er did service for 't: being press'd to the war,
Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,
They would not thread the gates. This kind of service
Did not deserve corn gratis. Being i' the war,
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd
Most valour, spoke not for them: the accusation
Which they have often made against the senate,
All cause unborn, could never be the motive
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then?
How shall this bisson multitude digest
The senate's courtesy? Let deeds express
What 's like to be their words: 'We did request it;
We are the greater poll, and in true fear
They gave us our demands.' Thus we debase
The nature of our seats and make the rabble

131. *bisson multitude.* So Dyce. Ff 'bosome-multiplied.' On 'bisson' cf. note to ii. 1. 70.

Call our cares fears; which will in time
Break ope the locks o' the senate and bring in
The crows to peck the eagles.
Men. Come, enough.
Bru. Enough, with over-measure.
Cor. No, take more:
What may be sworn by, both divine and human,
Seal what I end withal! This double worship,
Where one part does disdain with cause, the other
Insult without all reason, where gentry, title, wisdom,
Cannot conclude but by the yea and no
Of general ignorance,—it must omit
Real necessities, and give way the while
To unstable slightness: purpose so barr'd, it follows,
Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech you,—
You that will be less fearful than discreet,
That love the fundamental part of state
More than you doubt the change on 't, that prefer
A noble life before a long, and wish
To jump a body with a dangerous physic
That 's sure of death without it, at once pluck out
The multitudinous tongue; let them not lick
The sweet which is their poison: your dishonour
Mangles true judgement and bereaves the state
Of that integrity which should become 't,
Not having the power to do the good it would,
For the ill which doth control 't.
Bru. 'Has said enough;
Sic. 'Has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
As traitors do.
Cor. Thou wretch, despite o'erwhelm thee!

144. *without all*, without any, or beyond all.
154. *To jump*, to imperil.

What should the people do with these bald tribunes?
On whom depending, their obedience fails
To the greater bench: in a rebellion,
When what 's not meet, but what must be, was law,
Then were they chosen: in a better hour,
Let what is meet be said it must be meet,
And throw their power i' the dust.
Bru. Manifest treason!
Sic. This a consul? no.
Bru. The ædiles, ho!

Enter an Ædile.

Let him be apprehended.
Sic. Go, call the people: [*Exit Ædile*] in whose name myself
Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,
A foe to the public weal: obey, I charge thee,
And follow to thine answer.
Cor. Hence, old goat!
Senators, etc. We 'll surety him.
Com. Aged sir, hands off.
Cor. Hence, rotten thing! or I shall shake thy bones
Out of thy garments.
Sic. Help, ye citizens!

Enter a rabble of Citizens (*Plebeians*) *with the* Ædiles.

Men. On both sides more respect.
Sic. Here 's he that would take from you all your power.
Bru. Seize him, ædiles!

165. *bald*, witless ('chauve d'esprit'; bauld-spirited; 'that hath as little wit in, as he hath hair on, his head.'—Cotgrave, quot. Wright).

Citizens. Down with him! down with him!
Senators, etc. Weapons, weapons, weapons!
[*They all bustle about Coriolanus, crying*
'Tribunes!' 'Patricians!' 'Citizens!' 'What, ho!'
'Sicinius!' 'Brutus!' 'Coriolanus!' 'Citizens!'
'Peace, peace, peace!' 'Stay, hold, peace!'
Men. What is about to be? I am out of breath;
Confusion 's near; I cannot speak. You, tribunes
To the people! Coriolanus, patience!
Speak, good Sicinius.
Sic. Hear me, people; peace!
Citizens. Let 's hear our tribune: peace!
Speak, speak, speak.
Sic. You are at point to lose your liberties:
Marcius would have all from you; Marcius,
Whom late you have named for consul.
Men. Fie, fie, fie!
This is the way to kindle, not to quench.
First Sen. To unbuild the city and to lay all flat.
Sic. What is the city but the people?
Citizens. True,
The people are the city.
Bru. By the consent of all, we were establish'd
The people's magistrates.
Citizens. You so remain.
Men. And so are like to do.
Com. That is the way to lay the city flat;
To bring the roof to the foundation,
And bury all, which yet distinctly ranges,
In heaps and piles of ruin.
Sic. This deserves death.
Bru. Or let us stand to our authority,
Or let us lose it. We do here pronounce,
Upon the part o' the people, in whose power
We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy

Of present death.
Sic. Therefore lay hold of him;
Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence
Into destruction cast him.
Bru. Ædiles, seize him!
Citizens. Yield, Marcius, yield!
Men. Hear me one word;
Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.
Æd. Peace, peace!
Men. [*To Brutus*] Be that you seem, truly your country's friend,
And temperately proceed to what you would
Thus violently redress.
Bru. Sir, those cold ways,
That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous
Where the disease is violent. Lay hands upon him,
And bear him to the rock.
Cor. No, I'll die here.
[*Drawing his sword.*
There's some among you have beheld me fighting:
Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.
Men. Down with that sword! Tribunes, withdraw awhile.
Bru. Lay hands upon him.
Men. Help Marcius, help,
You that be noble; help him, young and old!
Citizens. Down with him, down with him!
[*In this mutiny, the Tribunes, the Ædiles, and the People, are beat in.*
Men. Go, get you to your house; be gone, away!
All will be naught else.
Sec. Sen. Get you gone.

213. *the rock Tarpeian*, a precipice on the Capitol, whence criminals were thrown.

Com. Stand fast;
We have as many friends as enemies.
Men. Shall it be put to that?
First Sen. The gods forbid!
I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house;
Leave us to cure this cause.
Men. For 'tis a sore upon us
You cannot tent yourself: be gone, beseech you.
Com. Come, sir, along with us.
Cor. I would they were barbarians—as they are,
Though in Rome litter'd—not Romans—as they are not,
Though calved i' the porch o' the Capitol—
Men. Be gone;
Put not your worthy rage into your tongue;
One time will owe another.
Cor. On fair ground
I could beat forty of them.
Men. I could myself
Take up a brace o' the best of them; yea, the two tribunes.
Com. But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic;
And manhood is call'd foolery, when it stands
Against a falling fabric. Will you hence,
Before the tag return? whose rage doth rend
Like interrupted waters and o'erbear
What they are used to bear.
Men. Pray you, be gone:
I'll try whether my old wit be in request
With those that have but little: this must be patch'd
With cloth of any colour.
Com. Nay, come away.
[*Exeunt Coriolanus, Cominius, and others.*

242. *One time will owe another;* i.e. if the plebeians win to-day we shall do so to-morrow.
248. *tag,* rabble.

A Patrician. This man has marr'd his fortune.
Men. His nature is too noble for the world:
He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for 's power to thunder. His heart 's his mouth:
What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent;
And, being angry, does forget that ever
He heard the name of death. [*A noise within.*
Here 's goodly work!
Sec. Pat. I would they were a-bed!
Men. I would they were in Tiber! What the vengeance!
Could he not speak 'em fair?

Re-enter BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS, *with the rabble.*

Sic. Where is this viper
That would depopulate the city and
Be every man himself?
Men. You worthy tribunes,—
Sic. He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock
With rigorous hands: he hath resisted law,
And therefore law shall scorn him further trial
Than the severity of the public power
Which he so sets at nought.
First Cit. He shall well know
The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,
And we their hands.
Citizens. He shall, sure on 't.
Men. Sir, sir,—
Sic. Peace!
Men. Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt
With modest warrant.
Sic. Sir, how comes 't that you
Have holp to make this rescue?

275. *cry havoc*, proclaim war to the death.

Men. Hear me speak:
As I do know the consul's worthiness,
So can I name his faults,—
Sic. Consul! what consul?
Men. The consul Coriolanus.
Bru. He consul!
Citizens. No, no, no, no, no.
Men. If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good people,
I may be heard, I would crave a word or two;
The which shall turn you to no further harm
Than so much loss of time.
Sic. Speak briefly then;
For we are peremptory to dispatch
This viperous traitor: to eject him hence
Were but one danger, and to keep him here
Our certain death: therefore it is decreed
He dies to-night.
Men. Now the good gods forbid
That our renowned Rome, whose gratitude
Towards her deserved children is enroll'd
In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam
Should now eat up her own!
Sic. He 's a disease that must be cut away.
Men. O, he 's a limb that has but a disease;
Mortal, to cut it off; to cure it, easy.
What has he done to Rome that 's worthy death?
Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost—
Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath,
By many an ounce—he dropp'd it for his country;
And what is left, to lose it by his country,
Were to us all, that do 't and suffer it,
A brand to the end o' the world.

288. *one*, constant, perpetual. But 'our' is a tempting emendation.

293. *Jove's own book.* A Jewish not a Roman idea.

Sic. This is clean kam.
Bru. Merely awry: when he did love his country,
It honour'd him.
Men. The service of the foot
Being once gangrened, is not then respected
For what before it was.
Bru. We 'll hear no more.
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence;
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.
Men. One word more, one word.
This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find
The harm of unscann'd swiftness, will too late
Tie leaden pounds to 's heels. Proceed by process;
Lest parties, as he is beloved, break out,
And sack great Rome with Romans.
Bru. If it were so,—
Sic. What do ye talk?
Have we not had a taste of his obedience?
Our ædiles smote? ourselves resisted? Come.
Men. Consider this: he has been bred i' the wars
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd
In bolted language; meal and bran together
He throws without distinction. Give me leave,
I 'll go to him, and undertake to bring him
Where he shall answer, by a lawful form,
In peace, to his utmost peril.
First Sen. Noble tribunes,
It is the humane way: the other course
Will prove too bloody; and the end of it
Unknown to the beginning.

304. *clean kam*, utterly crooked.
305. *Merely*, absolutely.
322. *bolted*, sifted.

Sic. Noble Menenius,
Be you then as the people's officer.
Masters, lay down your weapons.
Bru. Go not home.
Sic. Meet on the market-place. We 'll attend you there:
Where, if you bring not Marcius, we 'll proceed
In our first way.
Men. I 'll bring him to you.
[*To the Senators*] Let me desire your company: he must come,
Or what is worst will follow.
First Sen. Pray you, let 's to him.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A room in Coriolanus's house.*

Enter Coriolanus *with* Patricians.

Cor. Let them pull all about mine ears; present me
Death on the wheel or at wild horses' heels,
Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,
That the precipitation might down stretch
Below the beam of sight; yet will I still
Be thus to them.
A Patrician. You do the nobler.
Cor. I muse my mother
Does not approve me further, who was wont
To call them woollen vassals, things created
To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads
In congregations, to yawn, be still and wonder,
When one but of my ordinance stood up
To speak of peace or war.

5. *beam of sight*, range of the eye. 7. *muse*, wonder.

Enter VOLUMNIA.

I talk of you:
Why did you wish me milder? would you have me
False to my nature? Rather say I play
The man I am.
Vol. O, sir, sir, sir,
I would have had you put your power well on,
Before you had worn it out.
Cor. Let go.
Vol. You might have been enough the man you are,
With striving less to be so: lesser had been
The thwartings of your dispositions, if
You had not show'd them how ye were disposed
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.
Cor. Let them hang.
Vol. Ay, and burn too.

Enter MENENIUS *and* Senators.

Men. Come, come, you have been too rough, something too rough;
You must return and mend it.
First Sen. There's no remedy;
Unless, by not so doing, our good city
Cleave in the midst, and perish.
Vol. Pray, be counsell'd:
I have a heart as little apt as yours,
But yet a brain that leads my use of anger
To better vantage.

24. *Ay, and burn too.* The Folios give this speech to Volumnia; but modern editors, arguing that she is advising patience, take it from her. Yet her point of view is quite clear. She despises and hates the plebeians as much as Coriolanus can, but she would choose her own time to show her wrath. Cf. ll. 29 and 62. Cf. also Menenius in iii. 1. 262 for a similar attitude.

Men. Well said, noble woman!
Before he should thus stoop to the herd, but that
The violent fit o' the time craves it as physic
For the whole state, I would put mine armour on
Which I can scarcely bear.
Cor. What must I do?
Men. Return to the tribunes.
Cor. Well, what then? what then?
Men. Repent what you have spoke.
Cor. For them! I cannot do it to the gods;
Must I then do't to them?
Vol. You are too absolute;
Though therein you can never be too noble,
But when extremities speak. I have heard you say,
Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,
I' the war do grow together: grant that, and tell me,
In peace what each of them by the other lose,
That they combine not there.
Cor. Tush, tush!
Men. A good demand.
Vol. If it be honour in your wars to seem
The same you are not, which, for your best ends,
You adopt your policy, how is it less or worse,
That it shall hold companionship in peace
With honour, as in war, since that to both
It stands in like request?
Cor. Why force you this?
Vol. Because that now it lies you on to speak
To the people; not by your own instruction,
Nor by the matter which your heart prompts you,
But with such words that are but roted in
Your tongue, though but bastards and syllables
Of no allowance to your bosom's truth.
Now, this no more dishonours you at all

55. *roted*, learnt by heart, not spontaneous.

Than to take in a town with gentle words,
Which else would put you to your fortune and
The hazard of much blood.
I would dissemble with my nature where
My fortunes and my friends at stake required
I should do so in honour: I am in this,
Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles;
And you will rather show our general louts
How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em,
For the inheritance of their loves and safeguard
Of what that want might ruin.
Men. Noble lady!
Come, go with us; speak fair: you may salve so,
Not what is dangerous present, but the loss
Of what is past.
Vol. I prithee now, my son,
Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand;
And thus far having stretch'd it—here be with them—
Thy knee bussing the stones—for in such business
Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant
More learned than the ears—waving thy head,
Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
Now humble as the ripest mulberry
That will not hold the handling: or say to them,
Thou art their soldier, and being bred in broils
Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,
Were fit for thee to use as they to claim,

69. *that want*, the want of that inheritance.

75. *bussing*, kissing.

77. *waving*, repeatedly bowing.

78. *Which often, thus, correcting*, etc. If the text is right, 'humble' must be an imperative. 'Humble (your head), correcting thy pride with submissive gestures, like these.' The passage barely yields sense; but of the many alterations proposed (such as Johnson's 'with' for 'which') none can be called convincing. Prof. Littledale proposes instead of 'often,' 'offer' (as if for decapitation).

In asking their good loves, but thou wilt frame
Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
As thou hast power and person.
Men. This but done,
Even as she speaks, why, their hearts were yours;
For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free
As words to little purpose.
Vol. Prithee now,
Go, and be ruled: although I know thou hadst rather
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf
Than flatter him in a bower. Here is Cominius.

Enter COMINIUS.

Com. I have been i' the market-place; and, sir, 'tis fit
You make strong party, or defend yourself
By calmness or by absence: all 's in anger.
Men. Only fair speech.
Com. I think 'twill serve, if he
Can thereto frame his spirit.
Vol. He must, and will.
Prithee now, say you will, and go about it.
Cor. Must I go show them my unbarbed sconce?
Must I with base tongue give my noble heart
A lie that it must bear? Well, I will do 't:
Yet, were there but this single plot to lose,
This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it
And throw 't against the wind. To the market-place!
You have put me now to such a part which never
I shall discharge to the life.
Com. Come, come, we 'll prompt you.
Vol. I prithee now, sweet son, as thou hast said

99. *unbarbed sconce* head without a helmet. 102. *this single plot*, my single person.

My praises made thee first a soldier, so,
To have my praise for this, perform a part
Thou hast not done before.
Cor. Well, I must do 't:
Away, my disposition, and possess me
Some harlot's spirit! my throat of war be turn'd,
Which quired with my drum, into a pipe
Small as an eunuch, or the virgin voice
That babies lulls asleep! the smiles of knaves
Tent in my cheeks, and schoolboys' tears take up
The glasses of my sight! a beggar's tongue
Make motion through my lips, and my arm'd knees,
Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his
That hath received an alms! I will not do 't,
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth
And by my body's action teach my mind
A most inherent baseness.
Vol. At thy choice, then:
To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin; let
Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear
Thy dangerous stoutness, for I mock at death
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me,
But owe thy pride thyself.
Cor. Pray, be content:
Mother, I am going to the market-place;
Chide me no more. I 'll mountebank their loves,
Cog their hearts from them, and come home beloved
Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going:
Commend me to my wife. I 'll return consul;

113. *quired*, sounded in concert.
114. *Small as an eunuch*, high-pitched as a eunuch's voice.
116. *Tent*, encamp.
127. *stoutness*, obstinacy.
133. *Cog*, cheat.

Or never trust to what my tongue can do
I' the way of flattery further.
Vol. Do your will. [*Exit.*
Com. Away! the tribunes do attend you: arm yourself
To answer mildly; for they are prepared
With accusations, as I hear, more strong
Than are upon you yet.
Cor. The word is 'mildly.' Pray you, let us go:
Let them accuse me by invention, I
Will answer in mine honour.
Men. Ay, but mildly.
Cor. Well, mildly be it then. Mildly!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same. The Forum.*

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS.

Bru. In this point charge him home, that he affects
Tyrannical power: if he evade us there,
Enforce him with his envy to the people,
And that the spoil got on the Antiates
Was ne'er distributed.

Enter an Ædile.

What, will he come?
Æd. He's coming.
Bru. How accompanied?
Æd. With old Menenius, and those senators
That always favour'd him.
Sic. Have you a catalogue
Of all the voices that we have procured
Set down by the poll?

Æd. I have; 'tis ready.
Sic. Have you collected them by tribes?
Æd. I have.
Sic. Assemble presently the people hither;
And when they hear me say 'It shall be so
I' the right and strength o' the commons,' be it either
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,
If I say fine, cry 'Fine;' if death, cry 'Death.'
Insisting on the old prerogative
And power i' the truth o' the cause.
Æd. I shall inform them.
Bru. And when such time they have begun to cry,
Let them not cease, but with a din confused
Enforce the present execution
Of what we chance to sentence.
Æd. Very well.
Sic. Make them be strong and ready for this hint,
When we shall hap to give 't them.
Bru. Go about it. [*Exit Ædile.*
Put him to choler straight: he hath been used
Ever to conquer, and to have his worth
Of contradiction: being once chafed, he cannot
Be rein'd again to temperance; then he speaks
What 's in his heart; and that is there which looks
With us to break his neck.
Sic. Well, here he comes.

Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, *and* COMINIUS, *with* Senators *and* Patricians.

Men. Calmly, I do beseech you.
Cor. Ay, as an ostler, that for the poorest piece

29. *which looks*, etc., which promises with our aid to break his neck.
32. *piece*, coin.

Will bear the knave by the volume. The honour'd gods
Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
Supplied with worthy men! plant love among 's!
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,
And not our streets with war!
First Sen. Amen, amen.
Men. A noble wish.

Re-enter Ædile, *with* Citizens.

Sic. Draw near, ye people.
Æd. List to your tribunes. Audience! peace, I say!
Cor. First, hear me speak.
Both Tri. Well, say. Peace, ho!
Cor. Shall I be charged no further than this present?
Must all determine here?
Sic. I do demand,
If you submit you to the people's voices,
Allow their officers and are content
To suffer lawful censure for such faults
As shall be proved upon you?
Cor. I am content.
Men. Lo, citizens, he says he is content:
The warlike service he has done, consider; think
Upon the wounds his body bears, which show
Like graves i' the holy churchyard.
Cor. Scratches with briers,
Scars to move laughter only.
Men. Consider further,
That when he speaks not like a citizen,
You find him like a soldier: do not take
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,
But, as I say, such as become a soldier,

33. *bear the knave*, bear being called 'knave.'

Rather than envy you.

Com. Well, well, no more.

Cor. What is the matter
That being pass'd for consul with full voice,
I am so dishonour'd that the very hour
You take it off again?

Sic. Answer to us.

Cor. Say, then: 'tis true, I ought so.

Sic. We charge you, that you have contrived to take
From Rome all season'd office, and to wind
Yourself into a power tyrannical;
For which you are a traitor to the people.

Cor. How! traitor!

Men. Nay, temperately; your promise.

Cor. The fires i' the lowest hell fold-in the people!
Call me their traitor! Thou injurious tribune!
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say
'Thou liest' unto thee with a voice as free
As I do pray the gods.

Sic. Mark you this, people?

Citizens. To the rock, to the rock with him!

Sic. Peace!
We need not put new matter to his charge:
What you have seen him do and heard him speak,
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,
Opposing laws with strokes and here defying
Those whose great power must try him; even this,
So criminal and in such capital kind,
Deserves the extremest death.

Bru. But since he hath

57. *envy*, betoken ill-will towards. 64. *season'd*, established by long custom.

Served well for Rome,—
Cor. What do you prate of service?
Bru. I talk of that, that know it.
Cor. You?
Men. Is this the promise that you made your mother?
Com. Know, I pray you,—
Cor. I'll know no further:
Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger
But with a grain a day, I would not buy
Their mercy at the price of one fair word;
Nor check my courage for what they can give,
To have't with saying 'Good morrow.'
Sic. For that he has,
As much as in him lies, from time to time
Envied against the people, seeking means
To pluck away their power, as now at last
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
That do distribute it; in the name o' the people
And in the power of us the tribunes, we,
Even from this instant, banish him our city,
In peril of precipitation
From off the rock Tarpeian never more
To enter our Rome gates: i' the people's name,
I say it shall be so.
Citizens. It shall be so, it shall be so; let him away:
He's banish'd, and it shall be so.
Com. Hear me, my masters, and my common friends,—
Sic. He's sentenced; no more hearing.
Com. Let me speak:
I have been consul, and can show for Rome
Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love

My country's good with a respect more tender,
More holy and profound, than mine own life.
My dear wife's estimate, her womb's increase,
And treasure of my loins; then if I would
Speak that,—

Sic. We know your drift: speak what?

Bru. There 's no more to be said, but he is banish'd,
As enemy to the people and his country:
It shall be so.

Citizens. It shall be so, it shall be so.

Cor. You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate
As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air, I banish you;
And here remain with your uncertainty!
Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts!
Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
Fan you into despair! Have the power still
To banish your defenders; till at length
Your ignorance, which finds not till it feels,
Making but reservation of yourselves,
Still your own foes, deliver you as most
Abated captives to some nation
That won you without blows! Despising,
For you, the city, thus I turn my back:
There is a world elsewhere.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus, Cominius, Menenius, Senators, and Patricians.*

Æd. The people's enemy is gone, is gone!

Citizens. Our enemy is banish'd! he is gone!
Hoo! hoo! [*Shouting, and throwing up their caps.*

120. *cry*, pack.
130. *Making but reservation*, etc., preserving your lives, but ruining you in every other way.

Sic. Go, see him out at gates, and follow him,
As he hath follow'd you, with all despite;
Give him deserved vexation. Let a guard
Attend us through the city.
Citizens. Come, come; let's see him out at gates; come.
The gods preserve our noble tribunes! Come.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Rome. Before a gate of the city.*

Enter CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, *with the young Nobility of Rome.*

Cor. Come, leave your tears: a brief farewell: the beast
With many heads butts me away. Nay, mother,
Where is your ancient courage? you were used
To say extremity was the trier of spirits;
That common chances common men could bear;
That when the sea was calm all boats alike
Show'd mastership in floating; fortune's blows,
When most struck home, being gentle wounded, craves
A noble cunning: you were used to load me
With precepts that would make invincible
The heart that conn'd them.
Vir. O heavens! O heavens!
Cor. Nay, I prithee, woman,—
Vol. Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,

And occupations perish!

Cor. What, what, what!
I shall be loved when I am lack'd. Nay, mother,
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,
If you had been the wife of Hercules,
Six of his labours you'ld have done, and saved
Your husband so much sweat. Cominius,
Droop not; adieu. Farewell, my wife, my mother:
I'll do well yet. Thou old and true Menenius,
Thy tears are salter than a younger man's,
And venomous to thine eyes. My sometime general,
I have seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld
Heart-hardening spectacles; tell these sad women
'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes,
As 'tis to laugh at 'em. My mother, you wot well
My hazards still have been your solace: and
Believe 't not lightly—though I go alone,
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen
Makes fear'd and talk'd of more than seen—your son
Will or exceed the common, or be caught
With cautelous baits and practice.

Vol. My first son,
Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius
With thee awhile: determine on some course,
More than a wild exposture to each chance
That starts i' the way before thee.

Cor. O the gods!

Com. I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee
Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us
And we of thee: so if the time thrust forth
A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send

26. *fond*, foolish. 33. *cautelous*, crafty.
36. *exposture*, exposure.

O'er the vast world to seek a single man,
And lose advantage, which doth ever cool
I' the absence of the needer.
Cor. Fare ye well:
Thou hast years upon thee; and thou art too full
Of the wars' surfeits, to go rove with one
That 's yet unbruised: bring me but out at gate.
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and
My friends of noble touch, when I am forth,
Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come.
While I remain above the ground, you shall
Hear from me still, and never of me aught
But what is like me formerly.
Men. That 's worthily
As any ear can hear. Come, let 's not weep.
If I could shake off but one seven years
From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,
I 'ld with thee every foot.
Cor. Give me thy hand:
Come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. A street near the gate.*

Enter SICINIUS, BRUTUS, *with the* Ædile.

Sic. Bid them all home; he 's gone, and we 'll no further.
The nobility are vex'd, whom we see have sided
In his behalf.
Bru. Now we have shown our power,
Let us seem humbler after it is done
Than when it was a-doing.
Sic. Bid them home:
Say their great enemy is gone, and they

49. *of noble touch*, of tried quality.

Stand in their ancient strength.

Bru. Dismiss them home. [*Exit Ædile.*

Here comes his mother.

Sic. Let 's not meet her.

Bru. Why?

Sic. They say she 's mad.

Bru. They have ta'en note of us: keep on your way.

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *and* MENENIUS.

Vol. O, ye 're well met: the hoarded plague o' the gods

Requite your love!

Men. Peace, peace; be not so loud.

Vol. If that I could for weeping, you should hear,—

Nay, and you shall hear some. [*To Brutus*] Will you be gone?

Vir. [*To Sicinius*] You shall stay too: I would I had the power

To say so to my husband.

Sic. Are you mankind?

Vol. Ay, fool; is that a shame? Note but this fool.

Was not a man my father? Hadst thou foxship

To banish him that struck more blows for Rome

Than thou hast spoken words?

Sic. O blessed heavens!

Vol. More noble blows than ever thou wise words;

And for Rome's good. I 'll tell thee what; yet go:

Nay, but thou shalt stay too: I would my son

Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him,

His good sword in his hand.

11. *hoarded*, stored up for future vengeance.

Sic. What then?
Vir. What then!
He 'ld make an end of thy posterity.
Vol. Bastards and all.
Good man, the wounds that he does bear for Rome!
Men. Come, come, peace.
Sic. I would he had continued to his country
As he began, and not unknit himself
The noble knot he made.
Bru. I would he had.
Vol. 'I would he had'! 'Twas you incensed the rabble:
Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth
As I can of those mysteries which heaven
Will not have earth to know.
Bru. Pray, let us go.
Vol. Now, pray, sir, get you gone:
You have done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this:—
As far as doth the Capitol exceed
The meanest house in Rome, so far my son—
This lady's husband here, this, do you see—
Whom you have banish'd, does exceed you all.
Bru. Well, well, we 'll leave you.
Sic. Why stay we to be baited
With one that wants her wits?
Vol. Take my prayers with you.
[*Exeunt Tribunes.*
I would the gods had nothing else to do
But to confirm my curses! Could I meet 'em
But once a-day, it would unclog my heart
Of what lies heavy to 't.
Men. You have told them home;
And, by my troth, you have cause. You 'll sup with me?
Vol. Anger 's my meat; I sup upon myself,

And so shall starve with feeding. Come, let's go:
Leave this faint puling and lament as I do,
In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.
Men. Fie, fie, fie! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A highway between Rome and Antium.*

Enter a Roman *and a* Volsce, *meeting.*

Rom. I know you well, sir, and you know me: your name, I think, is Adrian.

Vols. It is so, sir: truly, I have forgot you.

Rom. I am a Roman; and my services are, as you are, against 'em: know you me yet?

Vols. Nicanor? no.

Rom. The same, sir.

Vols. You had more beard when I last saw you; but your favour is well appeared by your tongue. What's the news in Rome? I have a note from the Volscian state, to find you out there: you have well saved me a day's journey.

Rom. There hath been in Rome strange insurrections; the people against the senators, patricians, and nobles.

Vols. Hath been! is it ended, then? Our state thinks not so: they are in a most warlike preparation, and hope to come upon them in the heat of their division.

Rom. The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing would make it flame again: for the nobles receive so to heart the banishment of that worthy Coriolanus, that they are in a ripe aptness to take all power from the people and to

9. *appeared*, made apparent.

pluck from them their tribunes for ever. This lies glowing, I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out.

Vols. Coriolanus banished!

Rom. Banished, sir!

Vols. You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor.

Rom. The day serves well for them now. I have heard it said, the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she's fallen out with her husband. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country.

Vols. He cannot choose. I am most fortunate, thus accidentally to encounter you: you have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home.

Rom. I shall, between this and supper, tell you most strange things from Rome; all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you?

Vols. A most royal one; the centurions and their charges, distinctly billeted, already in the entertainment, and to be on foot at an hour's warning.

Rom. I am joyful to hear of their readiness, and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So, sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

Vols. You take my part from me, sir; I have the most cause to be glad of yours.

Rom. Well, let us go together. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *Antium. Before Aufidius's house.*

Enter Coriolanus *in mean apparel, disguised and muffled.*

Cor. A goodly city is this Antium. City,
'Tis I that made thy widows: many an heir
Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars
Have I heard groan and drop: then know me not,
Lest that thy wives with spits and boys with stones
In puny battle slay me.

Enter a Citizen.

Save you, sir.

Cit. And you.

Cor. Direct me, if it be your will,
Where great Aufidius lies: is he in Antium?

Cit. He is, and feasts the nobles of the state
At his house this night.

Cor. Which is his house, beseech you? 10

Cit. This, here before you.

Cor. Thank you, sir: farewell.
[*Exit Citizen.*
O world, thy slippery turns! Friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,
Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,
Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love
Unseparable, shall within this hour,
On a dissension of a doit, break out
To bitterest enmity: so, fellest foes,

Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep
To take the one the other, by some chance,
Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends
And interjoin their issues. So with me:
My birth-place hate I, and my love's upon
This enemy town. I'll enter: if he slay me,
He does fair justice; if he give me way,
I'll do his country service. [*Exit.*

SCENE V. *The same. A hall in Aufidius's house.*

Music within. Enter a Servingman.

First Serv. Wine, wine, wine! What service is here! I think our fellows are asleep. [*Exit.*

Enter a second Servingman.

Sec. Serv. Where's Cotus? my master calls for him. Cotus! [*Exit.*

Enter CORIOLANUS.

Cor. A goodly house: the feast smells well; but I
Appear not like a guest.

Re-enter the first Servingman.

First Serv. What would you have, friend? whence are you? Here's no place for you: pray, go to the door. [*Exit.*

Cor. I have deserved no better entertainment, In being Coriolanus.

21. *trick*, trifle.

Re-enter second Servingman.

Sec. Serv. Whence are you, sir? Has the porter his eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to such companions? Pray, get you out.

Cor. Away!

Sec. Serv. Away! get you away.

Cor. Now thou 'rt troublesome.

Sec. Serv. Are you so brave? I 'll have you talked with anon.

Enter a third Servingman. *The first meets him.*

Third Serv. What fellow 's this? 20

First Serv. A strange one as ever I looked on: I cannot get him out o' the house: prithee, call my master to him. [*Retires.*

Third Serv. What have you to do here, fellow? Pray you, avoid the house.

Cor. Let me but stand; I will not hurt your hearth.

Third Serv. What are you?

Cor. A gentleman.

Third Serv. A marvellous poor one. 30

Cor. True, so I am.

Third Serv. Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other station; here 's no place for you; pray you, avoid: come.

Cor. Follow your function, go, and batten on cold bits. [*Pushes him away.*

Third Serv. What, you will not? Prithee, tell my master what a strange guest he has here.

Sec. Serv. And I shall. [*Exit.*

Third Serv. Where dwellest thou? 40

Cor. Under the canopy!

14. *companions*, rough or strange fellows.
35. *batten*, feed.

Third Serv. Under the canopy!

Cor. Ay.

Third Serv. Where's that?

Cor. I' the city of kites and crows.

Third Serv. I' the city of kites and crows! What an ass it is! Then thou dwellest with daws too?

Cor. No, I serve not thy master.

Third Serv. How, sir! do you meddle with my master? 50

Cor. Ay; 'tis an honester service than to meddle with thy mistress.
Thou pratest, and pratest; serve with thy trencher, hence!

[*Beats him away. Exit third Servingman.*

Enter AUFIDIUS *with the second* Servingman.

Auf. Where is this fellow?

Sec. Serv. Here, sir: I 'ld have beaten him like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within.

[*Retires.*

Auf. Whence comest thou? what wouldst thou? thy name?
Why speak'st not? speak, man: what's thy name?

Cor. If, Tullus, [*Unmuffling.* 60
Not yet thou knowest me, and, seeing me, dost not
Think me for the man I am, necessity
Commands me name myself.

Auf. What is thy name?

Cor. A name unmusical to the Volscians' ears,
And harsh in sound to thine.

Auf. Say, what's thy name?
Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face
Bears a command in 't; though thy tackle 's torn,
Thou show'st a noble vessel: what 's thy name?

Cor. Prepare thy brow to frown: know'st thou me yet?

Auf. I know thee not: thy name?

Cor. My name is Caius Marcius, who hath done
To thee particularly and to all the Volsces
Great hurt and mischief; thereto witness may
My surname, Coriolanus: the painful service,
The extreme dangers and the drops of blood
Shed for my thankless country are requited
But with that surname; a good memory,
And witness of the malice and displeasure
Which thou shouldst bear me: only that name remains:
The cruelty and envy of the people,
Permitted by our dastard nobles, who
Have all forsook me, hath devour'd the rest;
And suffer'd me by the voice of slaves to be
Hooped out of Rome. Now this extremity
Hath brought me to thy hearth; not out of hope—
Mistake me not—to save my life, for if
I had fear'd death, of all the men i' the world
I would have 'voided thee, but in mere spite,
To be full quit of those my banishers,
Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast
A heart of wreak in thee, that wilt revenge
Thine own particular wrongs, and stop those maims
Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight,
And make my misery serve thy turn: so use it
That my revengeful services may prove
As benefits to thee, for I will fight
Against my canker'd country with the spleen
Of all the under fiends. But if so be
Thou darest not this and that to prove more fortunes

77. *memory*, memorial.
84. *Hooped*, whooped, hooted.
92. *maims of shame*, shameful injuries.

Thou 'rt tired, then, in a word, I also am
Longer to live most weary, and present
My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice ;
Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,
Since I have ever follow'd thee with hate,
Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,
And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
It be to do thee service.
Auf. O Marcius, Marcius !
Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart
A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter
Should from yond cloud speak divine things,
And say 'Tis true,' I 'ld not believe them more
Than thee, all noble Marcius. Let me twine
Mine arms about that body, where against
My grained ash an hundred times hath broke,
And scarr'd the moon with splinters : here I clip
The anvil of my sword, and do contest
As hotly and as nobly with thy love
As ever in ambitious strength I did
Contend against thy valour. Know thou first,
I loved the maid I married ; never man
Sigh'd truer breath ; but that I see thee here,
Thou noble thing ! more dances my rapt heart
Than when I first my wedded mistress saw
Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars ! I tell thee,
We have a power on foot ; and I had purpose
Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,
Or lose mine arm for 't : thou hast beat me out
Twelve several times, and I have nightly since
Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me :
We have been down together in my sleep,
Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat ;
And waked half dead with nothing. Worthy Marcius,

Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that
Thou art thence banish'd, we would muster all
From twelve to seventy, and pouring war
Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,
Like a bold flood o'er-beat. O, come, go in,
And take our friendly senators by the hands;
Who now are here, taking their leaves of me,
Who am prepared against your territories,
Though not for Rome itself.

Cor. You bless me, gods!

Auf. Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have
The leading of thine own revenges, take
The one half of my commission; and set down—
As best thou art experienced, since thou know'st
Thy country's strength and weakness,—thine own ways;
Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
Or rudely visit them in parts remote,
To fright them, ere destroy. But come in:
Let me commend thee first to those that shall
Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes!
And more a friend than e'er an enemy;
Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand: most welcome!

[*Exeunt Coriolanus and Aufidius. The two Servingmen come forward.*

First Serv. Here's a strange alteration!

Sec. Serv. By my hand, I had thought to have strucken him with a cudgel; and yet my mind gave me his clothes made a false report of him.

First Serv. What an arm he has! he turned me about with his finger and his thumb, as one would set up a top.

Sec. Serv. Nay, I knew by his face that there

was something in him: he had, sir, a kind of face, methought,—I cannot tell how to term it.

First Serv. He had so; looking as it were—would I were hanged, but I thought there was more in him than I could think.

Sec. Serv. So did I, I'll be sworn: he is simply the rarest man i' the world.

First Serv. I think he is: but a greater soldier than he, you wot one.

Sec. Serv. Who, my master?

First Serv. Nay, it's no matter for that.

Sec. Serv. Worth six on him.

First Serv. Nay, not so neither: but I take him to be the greater soldier.

Sec. Serv. Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that: for the defence of a town, our general is excellent.

First Serv. Ay, and for an assault too.

Re-enter third Servingman.

Third Serv. O slaves, I can tell you news,—news, you rascals!

First and Sec. Serv. What, what, what? let's partake.

Third Serv. I would not be a Roman, of all nations; I had as lieve be a condemned man.

First and Sec. Serv. Wherefore? wherefore?

Third Serv. Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general, Caius Marcius.

First Serv. Why do you say 'thwack our general'?

Third Serv. I do not say 'thwack our general;' but he was always good enough for him.

Sec. Serv. Come, we are fellows and friends: he was ever too hard for him; I have heard him say so himself.

First Serv. He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on 't: before Corioli he scotched him and notched him like a carbonado.

Sec. Serv. An he had been cannibally given, he might have broiled and eaten him too.

First Serv. But, more of thy news?

Third Serv. Why, he is so made on here within, as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper end o' the table; no question asked him by any of the senators, but they stand bald before him: our general himself makes a mistress of him; sanctifies himself with 's hand and turns up the white o' the eye to his discourse. But the bottom of the news is, our general is cut i' the middle and but one half of what he was yesterday; for the other has half, by the entreaty and grant of the whole table. He 'll go, he says, and sowl the porter of Rome gates by the ears: he will mow all down before him, and leave his passage polled.

Sec. Serv. And he 's as like to do 't as any man I can imagine.

Third Serv. Do 't! he will do 't; for, look you, sir, he has as many friends as enemies; which friends, sir, as it were, durst not, look you, sir, show themselves, as we term it, his friends whilst he 's in directitude.

First Serv. Directitude! what 's that?

Third Serv. But when they shall see, sir, his crest up again, and the man in blood, they will out of their burrows, like conies after rain, and revel all with him.

First Serv. But when goes this forward?

198. *scotched*, made thin cuts in.
199. *carbonado*, meat slashed for broiling.
213. *sowl*, pull.
215. *polled*, laid bare, like a hay-field mown and carried.
222. *directitude;* a blundering coinage for *discredit* or the like.

Third Serv. To-morrow; to-day; presently; you shall have the drum struck up this afternoon: 'tis, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips.

Sec. Serv. Why, then we shall have a stirring world again. This peace is nothing, but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

First Serv. Let me have war, say I; it exceeds peace as far as day does night; it's spritely, waking, audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible; a getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men.

Sec. Serv. 'Tis so: and as war, in some sort, may be said to be a ravisher, so it cannot be denied but peace is a great maker of cuckolds.

First Serv. Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

Third Serv. Reason; because they then less need one another. The wars for my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising, they are rising.

All. In, in, in, in! [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. *Rome. A public place.*

Enter Sicinius *and* Brutus.

Sic. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him;
His remedies are tame i' the present peace
And quietness of the people, which before
Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends
Blush that the world goes well; who rather had,

239. *mulled*, dispirited, like sweetened wine.

Though they themselves did suffer by 't, behold
Dissentious numbers pestering streets than see
Our tradesmen singing in their shops and going
About their functions friendly.

Bru. We stood to 't in good time. [*Enter Menenius.*] Is this Menenius?

Sic. 'Tis he, 'tis he: O, he is grown most kind of late.

Hail, sir!

Men. Hail to you both!

Sic. Your Coriolanus
Is not much miss'd, but with his friends:
The commonwealth doth stand, and so would do,
Were he more angry at it.

Men. All 's well; and might have been much better, if
He could have temporized.

Sic. Where is he, hear you?

Men. Nay, I hear nothing: his mother and his wife
Hear nothing from him.

Enter three or four Citizens.

Citizens. The gods preserve you both!

Sic. God-den, our neighbours.

Bru. God-den to you all, god-den to you all.

First Cit. Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our knees,
Are bound to pray for you both.

Sic. Live, and thrive!

Bru. Farewell, kind neighbours: we wish'd Coriolanus
Had loved you as we did.

Citizens. Now the gods keep you!

Both Tri. Farewell, farewell.

[*Exeunt Citizens.*

Sic. This is a happier and more comely time
Than when these fellows ran about the streets,
Crying confusion.
Brū. Caius Marcius was
A worthy officer i' the war; but insolent,
O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking,
Self-loving,—
Sic. And affecting one sole throne,
Without assistance.
Men. I think not so.
Sic. We should by this, to all our lamentation,
If he had gone forth consul, found it so.
Bru. The gods have well prevented it, and Rome
Sits safe and still without him.

Enter an Ædile.

Æd. Worthy tribunes,
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,
Reports, the Volsces with two several powers
Are enter'd in the Roman territories,
And with the deepest malice of the war
Destroy what lies before 'em.
Men. 'Tis Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world;
Which were inshell'd when Marcius stood for Rome,
And durst not once peep out.
Sic. Come, what talk you
Of Marcius?
Bru. Go see this rumourer whipp'd. It cannot be
The Volsces dare break with us.
Men. Cannot be!
We have record that very well it can,
And three examples of the like have been

Within my age. But reason with the fellow,
Before you punish him, where he heard this,
Lest you shall chance to whip your information
And beat the messenger who bids beware
Of what is to be dreaded.

Sic. Tell not me:
I know this cannot be.

Bru. Not possible.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. The nobles in great earnestness are going
All to the senate-house: some news is come
That turns their countenances.

Sic. 'Tis this slave;—
Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes:—his raising; 60
Nothing but his report.

Mess. Yes, worthy sir,
The slave's report is seconded; and more,
More fearful, is deliver'd.

Sic. What more fearful?

Mess. It is spoke freely out of many mouths—
How probable I do not know—that Marcius,
Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome,
And vows revenge as spacious as between
The young'st and oldest thing.

Sic. This is most likely!

Bru. Raised only, that the weaker sort may wish
Good Marcius home again.

Sic. The very trick on 't. 70

Men. This is unlikely:
He and Aufidius can no more atone
Than violentest contrariety.

Enter a second Messenger.

Sec. Mess. You are sent for to the senate:
A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius,

Associated with Aufidius, rages
Upon our territories; and have already
O'erborne their way, consumed with fire, and took
What lay before them.

Enter COMINIUS.

Com. O, you have made good work!
Men. What news? what news?
Com. You have holp to ravish your own daughters and
To melt the city leads upon your pates,
To see your wives dishonour'd to your noses,—
Men. What 's the news? what 's the news?
Com. Your temples burned in their cement, and
Your franchises, whereon you stood, confined
Into an auger's bore.
Men. Pray now, your news?
You have made fair work, I fear me.—Pray, your news?—
If Marcius should be join'd with Volscians,—
Com. If!
He is their god: he leads them like a thing
Made by some other deity than nature,
That shapes man better; and they follow him,
Against us brats, with no less confidence
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,
Or butchers killing flies.
Men. You have made good work,
You and your apron-men; you that stood so much
Upon the voice of occupation and
The breath of garlic-eaters!
Com. He 'll shake your Rome about your ears.

94. *butterflies.* The repetition, otherwise irritating, of 'flies' in the next line, makes it possible that Shakespeare used here the form 'butterflee,' found in Drayton, *Mus. Elys.* viii., rhyming with 'be.' L.

97. *the voice of occupation*, the working-men's vote.

Men. As Hercules
Did shake down mellow fruit. You have made
fair work!
Bru. But is this true, sir?
Com. Ay; and you 'll look pale
Before you find it other. All the regions
Do smilingly revolt; and who resist
Are mock'd for valiant ignorance,
And perish constant fools. Who is 't can blame
him?
Your enemies and his find something in him.
Men. We are all undone, unless
The noble man have mercy.
Com. Who shall ask it?
The tribunes cannot do 't for shame; the people
Deserve such pity of him as the wolf
Does of the shepherds: for his best friends, if they
Should say 'Be good to Rome,' they charged him
even
As those should do that had deserved his hate,
And therein show'd like enemies.
Men. 'Tis true:
If he were putting to my house the brand
That should consume it, I have not the face
To say 'Beseech you, cease.' You have made fair
hands,
You and your crafts! you have crafted fair!
Com. You have brought
A trembling upon Rome, such as was never
So incapable of help.
Both Tri. Say not, we brought it.
Men. How! Was it we? we loved him; but,
like beasts
And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,
Who did hoot him out o' the city.

105. *constant*, confirmed. 112. *charged*, would charge.

Com. But I fear
They 'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,
The second name of men, obeys his points
As if he were his officer: desperation
Is all the policy, strength and defence,
That Rome can make against them.

Enter a troop of Citizens.

Men. Here come the clusters.
And is Aufidius with him? You are they
That made the air unwholesome, when you cast
Your stinking greasy caps in hooting at
Coriolanus' exile. Now he 's coming;
And not a hair upon a soldier's head
Which will not prove a whip: as many coxcombs
As you threw caps up will he tumble down,
And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter;
If he could burn us all into one coal,
We have deserved it.

Citizens. Faith, we hear fearful news.

First Cit. For mine own part,
When I said, banish him, I said, 'twas pity.

Sec. Cit. And so did I.

Third Cit. And so did I; and, to say the truth, so did very many of us: that we did, we did for the best; and though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet it was against our will.

Com. Ye 're goodly things, you voices!

Men. You have made
Good work, you and your cry! Shall 's to the Capitol?

Com. O, ay, what else?

[*Exeunt Cominius and Menenius.*

Sic. Go, masters, get you home; be not dismay'd:

These are a side that would be glad to have
This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,
And show no sign of fear.

First Cit. The gods be good to us! Come, masters, let 's home. I ever said we were i' the wrong when we banished him.

Sec. Cit. So did we all. But, come, let 's home.

[*Exeunt Citizens.*

Bru. I do not like this news.

Sic. Nor I.

Bru. Let 's to the Capitol. Would half my wealth
Would buy this for a lie!

Sic. Pray, let us go.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *A camp, at a small distance from Rome.*

Enter AUFIDIUS *and his* Lieutenant.

Auf. Do they still fly to the Roman?

Lieu. I do not know what witchcraft 's in him, but
Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat,
Their talk at table, and their thanks at end;
And you are darken'd in this action, sir,
Even by your own.

Auf. I cannot help it now,
Unless, by using means, I lame the foot
Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,
Even to my person, than I thought he would
When first I did embrace him: yet his nature
In that 's no changeling; and I must excuse
What cannot be amended.

Lieu. Yet I wish, sir,—
I mean for your particular,—you had not
Join'd in commission with him; but either
Had borne the action of yourself, or else
To him had left it solely.

Auf. I understand thee well; and be thou sure,
When he shall come to his account, he knows not
What I can urge against him. Although it seems,
And so he thinks, and is no less apparent
To the vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,
And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state,
Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon
As draw his sword; yet he hath left undone
That which shall break his neck or hazard mine,
Whene'er we come to our account.

Lieu. Sir, I beseech you, think you he 'll carry Rome?

Auf. All places yield to him ere he sits down;
And the nobility of Rome are his:
The senators and patricians love him too:
The tribunes are no soldiers; and their people
Will be as rash in the repeal, as hasty
To expel him thence. I think he 'll be to Rome
As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it
By sovereignty of nature. First he was
A noble servant to them; but he could not
Carry his honours even: whether 'twas pride,
Which out of daily fortune ever taints
The happy man; whether defect of judgement,
To fail in the disposing of those chances
Which he was lord of; or whether nature,
Not to be other than one thing, not moving

34. *As is the osprey to the fish.* Fish are said to turn on their backs at the sight of the osprey, 'subdued ere they are touched'; cf. *Two Noble Kinsmen*, i. 1. 139.

41. *nature, not to be other*, etc., his unbending temperament.

From the casque to the cushion, but commanding peace
Even with the same austerity and garb
As he controll'd the war; but one of these—
As he hath spices of them all, not all,
For I dare so far free him—made him fear'd,
So hated, and so banish'd; but he has a merit,
To choke it in the utterance. So our virtues
Lie in the interpretation of the time: 50
And power, unto itself most commendable,
Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair
To extol what it hath done.
One fire drives out one fire; one nail, one nail;
Rights by rights falter, strengths by strengths do fail.
Come, let 's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,
Thou art poor'st of all; then shortly art thou mine. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Rome. A public place.*

Enter MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS, *and others.*

Men. No, I 'll not go: you hear what he hath said
Which was sometime his general, who loved him

49-53. *our virtues lie*, etc.; our reputation for virtue is in the hands of our contemporaries; and power, confident of its own merits, has no more obvious road to ruin than by proclaiming them. This I think the clear sense. But some commentators prefer to understand the whole as a tribute to Coriolanus, taking 'tomb' in the sense of 'monument.'

55. *falter*. So Dyce for the unintelligible 'fouler' of Ff. The emendation cannot be called certain.

In a most dear particular. He call'd me father:
But what o' that? Go, you that banish'd him;
A mile before his tent fall down, and knee
The way into his mercy: nay, if he coy'd
To hear Cominius speak, I 'll keep at home.
Com. He would not seem to know me.
Men. Do you hear?
Com. Yet one time he did call me by my name:
I urged our old acquaintance, and the drops
That we have bled together. Coriolanus
He would not answer to: forbad all names;
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
Till he had forged himself a name o' the fire
Of burning Rome.
Men. Why, so: you have made good work!
A pair of tribunes that have rack'd for Rome,
To make coals cheap: a noble memory!
Com. I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon
When it was less expected: he replied,
It was a bare petition of a state
To one whom they had punish'd.
Men. Very well:
Could he say less?
Com. I offer'd to awaken his regard
For 's private friends: his answer to me was,
He could not stay to pick them in a pile
Of noisome musty chaff: he said 'twas folly,
For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt,
And still to nose the offence.
Men. For one poor grain or two!
I am one of those; his mother, wife, his child,
And this brave fellow too, we are the grains:
You are the musty chaff; and you are smelt

3. *In a most dear particular*, as a dear personal friend.
16. *rack'd*, striven, strained.
20. *bare petition*, a request unaccompanied by any promise of atonement or restitution.

Above the moon: we must be burnt for you.
Sic. Nay, pray, be patient: if you refuse your aid
In this so never-needed help, yet do not
Upbraid 's with our distress. But, sure, if you
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
More than the instant army we can make,
Might stop our countryman.
Men. No, I 'll not meddle.
Sic. Pray you, go to him.
Men. What should I do?
Bru. Only make trial what your love can do
For Rome, towards Marcius.
Men. Well, and say that Marcius
Return me, as Cominius is return'd,
Unheard; what then?
But as a discontented friend, grief-shot
With his unkindness? say 't be so?
Sic. Yet your good will
Must have that thanks from Rome, after the measure
As you intended well.
Men. I 'll undertake 't:
I think he 'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip
And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.
He was not taken well; he had not dined:
The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then
We pout upon the morning, are unapt
To give or to forgive; but when we have stuff'd
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priest-like fasts: therefore I 'll watch him
Till he be dieted to my request,
And then I 'll set upon him.

44. *grief-shot*, sorrow-stricken.

Bru. You know the very road into his kindness,
And cannot lose your way.
Men. Good faith, I 'll prove him,
Speed how it will. I shall ere long have knowledge
Of my success. [*Exit.*
Com. He 'll never hear him.
Sic. Not?
Com. I tell you, he does sit in gold, his eye
Red as 'twould burn Rome; and his injury
The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him;
'Twas very faintly he said 'Rise;' dismiss'd me
Thus, with his speechless hand: what he would do,
He sent in writing after me, what he would not,
Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions:
So that all hope is vain,
Unless his noble mother, and his wife;
Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him
For mercy to his country. Therefore, let 's hence,
And with our fair entreaties haste them on.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *Entrance of the Volscian camp before Rome. Two* Sentinels *on guard.*

Enter to them, Menenius.

First Sen. Stay: whence are you?

63 f. 'The ambassadors that were sent were Martius' familiar friends and acquaintance, who looked at the least for a courteous welcome of him, as of their familiar friend and kinsman. Howbeit they found nothing less; for at their coming they were brought through the camp to the place where he was set in his chair of state, with a marvellous and unspeakable majesty' (North).

69. *Bound with an oath.* The transaction is obscurely described. Apparently it is thus. Coriolanus indicates what he will concede, and binds himself by oath to concede nothing more.

Sec. Sen. Stand, and go back.
Men. You guard like men; 'tis well: but, by your leave,
I am an officer of state, and come
To speak with Coriolanus.
First Sen. From whence?
Men. From Rome.
First Sen. You may not pass, you must return: our general
Will no more hear from thence.
Sec. Sen. You 'll see your Rome embraced with fire before
You 'll speak with Coriolanus.
Men. Good my friends,
If you have heard your general talk of Rome,
And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks,
My name hath touch'd your ears: it is Menenius.
First Sen. Be it so; go back: the virtue of your name
Is not here passable.
Men. I tell thee, fellow,
Thy general is my lover: I have been
The book of his good acts, whence men have read
His fame unparallel'd, haply amplified;
For I have ever verified my friends,
Of whom he 's chief, with all the size that verity
Would without lapsing suffer: nay, sometimes,
Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground,
I have tumbled past the throw; and in his praise
Have almost stamp'd the leasing: therefore, fellow,
I must have leave to pass.

13. *passable*, is no pass-word here.
17. *verified*, been true to (by doing full justice to their merits).
20. *subtle*, deceptive.
22. *stamp'd the leasing*, passed a lie for truth.

First Sen. Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf as you have uttered words in your own, you should not pass here; no, though it were as virtuous to lie as to live chastely. Therefore, go back.

Men. Prithee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius, always factionary on the party of your general.

Sec. Sen. Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say you have, I am one that, telling true under him, must say, you cannot pass. Therefore, go back.

Men. Has he dined, canst thou tell? for I would not speak with him till after dinner.

First Sen. You are a Roman, are you?

Men. I am, as thy general is.

First Sen. Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you, when you have pushed out your gates the very defender of them, and, in a violent popular ignorance, given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a decayed dotant as you seem to be? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in, with such weak breath as this? No, you are deceived; therefore, back to Rome, and prepare for your execution: you are condemned, our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

Men. Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

First Sen. Come, my captain knows you not.

Men. I mean, thy general.

47. *dotant*, dotard.

First Sen. My general cares not for you. Back, I say, go; lest I let forth your half-pint of blood; back,—that's the utmost of your having: back.

Men. Nay, but, fellow, fellow,—

Enter CORIOLANUS *and* AUFIDIUS.

Cor. What's the matter?

Men. Now, you companion, I'll say an errand for you: you shall know now that I am in estimation; you shall perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office me from my son Coriolanus: guess, but by my entertainment with him, if thou standest not i' the state of hanging, or of some death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering; behold now presently, and swoon for what's to come upon thee. [*To Cor.*] The glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy particular prosperity, and love thee no worse than thy old father Menenius does! O my son, my son! thou art preparing fire for us; look thee, here's water to quench it. I was hardly moved to come to thee; but being assured none but myself could move thee, I have been blown out of your gates with sighs; and conjure thee to pardon Rome, and thy petitionary countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath, and turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here,—this, who, like a block, hath denied my access to thee.

Cor. Away!

Men. How! away!

Cor. Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs

67. *Jack guardant*, Jack on guard (with the suggestion of 'Jack in office,' and hence of officious intervention, made explicit in the following words).

78. *hardly*, with difficulty.

Are servanted to others: though I owe
My revenge properly, my remission lies
In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,
Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison, rather
Than pity note how much. Therefore, be gone.
Mine ears against your suits are stronger than
Your gates against my force. Yet, for I loved thee,
Take this along; I writ it for thy sake,
[*Gives a letter.*
And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,
I will not hear thee speak. This man, Aufidius,
Was my beloved in Rome: yet thou behold'st:

Auf. You keep a constant temper.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus and Aufidius.*

First Sen. Now, sir, is your name Menenius?

Sec. Sen. 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power: you know the way home again.

First Sen. Do you hear how we are shent for keeping your greatness back?

Sec. Sen. What cause, do you think, I have to swoon?

Men. I neither care for the world nor your general: for such things as you, I can scarce think there's any, ye're so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself fears it not from another: let your general do his worst. For you, be that you are, long; and your misery increase with your age! I say to you, as I was said to, Away!
[*Exit.*

First Sen. A noble fellow, I warrant him.

Sec. Sen. The worthy fellow is our general: he's the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken.
[*Exeunt.*

89. *I owe my revenge*, etc., the right to revenge is mine, but the right to remit vengeance belongs to the Volsces.

104. *shent*, shamed, punished.

SCENE III. *The tent of Coriolanus.*

Enter CORIOLANUS, AUFIDIUS, *and others.*

Cor. We will before the walls of Rome tomorrow
Set down our host. My partner in this action,
You must report to the Volscian lords, how plainly
I have borne this business.
Auf. Only their ends
You have respected; stopp'd your ears against
The general suit of Rome; never admitted
A private whisper, no, not with such friends
That thought them sure of you.
Cor. This last old man,
Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to Rome,
Loved me above the measure of a father;
Nay, godded me indeed. Their latest refuge
Was to send him; for whose old love I have,
Though I show'd sourly to him, once more offer'd
The first conditions, which they did refuse
And cannot now accept; to grace him only
That thought he could do more, a very little
I have yielded to; fresh embassies and suits,
Nor from the state nor private friends, hereafter
Will I lend ear to. Ha! what shout is this?
[*Shout within.*
Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow
In the same time 'tis made? I will not.

Enter, in mourning habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, *leading young* MARCIUS, VALERIA, *and* Attendants.

My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd mould

3. *plainly,* honestly.

Wherein this trunk was framed, and in her hand
The grandchild to her blood. But out, affection!
All bond and privilege of nature, break!
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.
What is that curt'sy worth? or those doves' eyes,
Which can make gods forsworn? I melt, and am
not
Of stronger earth than others. My mother bows;
As if Olympus to a molehill should
In supplication nod: and my young boy
Hath an aspect of intercession, which
Great nature cries 'Deny not.' Let the Volsces
Plough Rome, and harrow Italy: I'll never
Be such a gosling to obey instinct, but stand,
As if a man were author of himself
And knew no other kin.

Vir. My lord and husband!

Cor. These eyes are not the same I wore in
Rome.

Vir. The sorrow that delivers us thus changed
Makes you think so.

Cor. Like a dull actor now,
I have forgot my part, and I am out,
Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,
Forgive my tyranny; but do not say
For that 'Forgive our Romans.' O, a kiss
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!
Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss
I carried from thee, dear; and my true lip
Hath virgin'd it e'er since. You gods! I prate,
And the most noble mother of the world
Leave unsaluted: sink, my knee, i' the earth;
[*Kneels.*
Of thy deep duty more impression show

46. *the jealous queen of heaven.* Juno among the Romans presided over marriage rites.

Than that of common sons.
Vol. O, stand up blest!
Whilst, with no softer cushion than the flint,
I kneel before thee; and unproperly
Show duty, as mistaken all this while
Between the child and parent. [*Kneels.*
Cor. What is this?
Your knees to me? to your corrected son?
Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach
Fillip the stars; then let the mutinous winds
Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun;
Murdering impossibility, to make
What cannot be, slight work.
Vol. Thou art my warrior;
I holp to frame thee. Do you know this lady?
Cor. The noble sister of Publicola,
The moon of Rome; chaste as the icicle
That 's curdied by the frost from purest snow
And hangs on Dian's temple: dear Valeria!
Vol. This is a poor epitome of yours,
Which by the interpretation of full time
May show like all yourself.
Cor. The god of soldiers,
With the consent of supreme Jove, inform
Thy thoughts with nobleness, that thou mayst prove
To shame unvulnerable, and stick i' the wars
Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,
And saving those that eye thee!
Vol. Your knee, sirrah.
Cor. That 's my brave boy!
Vol. Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,

65. *The moon of Rome.* Luna was identified with Diana and was hence the goddess of chastity. The 'chaste,' 'cold' moon belongs to classic, the 'fickle' ('lunish') moon to mediæval, folklore.

74. *flaw*, gust of wind.

Are suitors to you.

Cor. I beseech you, peace:
Or, if you 'ld ask, remember this before:
The thing I have forsworn to grant may never
Be held by you denials. Do not bid me
Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
Again with Rome's mechanics: tell me not
Wherein I seem unnatural: desire not
To allay my rages and revenges with
Your colder reasons.

Vol. O, no more, no more!
You have said you will not grant us any thing;
For we have nothing else to ask, but that
Which you deny already: yet we will ask;
That, if you fail in our request, the blame
May hang upon your hardness: therefore hear us.

Cor. Aufidius, and you Volsces, mark; for we 'll
Hear nought from Rome in private. Your request?

Vol. Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment
And state of bodies would bewray what life
We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself
How more unfortunate than all living women
Are we come hither: since that thy sight, which should
Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
Constrains them weep and shake with fear and sorrow;
Making the mother, wife and child to see
The son, the husband and the father tearing
His country's bowels out. And to poor we
Thine enmity's most capital: thou barr'st us

80. *The thing I have forsworn*, etc.; *i.e.* in saying no, I shall not be refusing *your* request, as such, but merely observing my oath to refuse any.

82. *capitulate*, negotiate.

Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort
That all but we enjoy; for how can we,
Alas, how can we for our country pray,
Whereto we are bound, together with thy victory,
Whereto we are bound? alack, or we must lose
The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,
Our comfort in the country. We must find
An evident calamity, though we had
Our wish, which side should win: for either thou
Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
With manacles thorough our streets, or else
Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,
And bear the palm for having bravely shed
Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,
I purpose not to wait on fortune till
These wars determine: if I cannot persuade thee
Rather to show a noble grace to both parts
Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner
March to assault thy country than to tread—
Trust to 't, thou shalt not—on thy mother's womb,
That brought thee to this world.

Vir. Ay, and mine,
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name
Living to time.

Young Mar. A' shall not tread on me;
I 'll run away till I am bigger, but then I 'll fight.

Cor. Not of a woman's tenderness to be,
Requires nor child nor woman's face to see.
I have sat too long. [*Rising.*

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
If it were so that our request did tend
To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
The Volsces whom you serve, you might condemn us,

120. *determine*, are decided or ended.

As poisonous of your honour: no; our suit
Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volsces
May say 'This mercy we have show'd;' the Romans,
'This we received;' and each in either side
Give the all-hail to thee, and cry 'Be blest
For making up this peace!' Thou know'st, great son,
The end of war's uncertain, but this certain,
That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit,
Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name,
Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses;
Whose chronicle thus writ: 'The man was noble,
But with his last attempt he wiped it out;
Destroy'd his country, and his name remains
To the ensuing age abhorr'd.' Speak to me, son:
Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour,
To imitate the graces of the gods;
To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' the air,
And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt
That should but rive an oak. Why dost not speak?
Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man
Still to remember wrongs? Daughter, speak you:
He cares not for your weeping. Speak thou, boy:
Perhaps thy childishness will move him more
Than can our reasons. There's no man in the world
More bound to's mother; yet here he lets me prate
Like one i' the stocks. Thou hast never in thy life
Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy,
When she, poor hen, fond of no second brood,
Has cluck'd thee to the wars and safely home,
Loaden with honour. Say my request's unjust,

152. *charge.* So Theobald for Ff 'change.'

And spurn me back: but if it be not so,
Thou art not honest, and the gods will plague thee,
That thou restrain'st from me the duty which
To a mother's part belongs. He turns away:
Down, ladies; let us shame him with our knees.
To his surname Coriolanus 'longs more pride
Than pity to our prayers. Down: an end;
This is the last: so we will home to Rome,
And die among our neighbours. Nay, behold 's:
This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,
But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship,
Does reason our petition with more strength
Than thou hast to deny 't. Come, let us go:
This fellow had a Volscian to his mother;
His wife is in Corioli and his child
Like him by chance. Yet give us our dispatch:
I am hush'd until our city be afire,
And then I 'll speak a little. [*He holds her by the hand, silent.*

Cor. O mother, mother!
What have you done? Behold, the heavens do ope,
The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
They laugh at. O my mother, mother! O!
You have won a happy victory to Rome;
But, for your son, believe it, O, believe it,
Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
If not most mortal to him. But, let it come.
Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,
I 'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
Were you in my stead, would you have heard
A mother less? or granted less, Aufidius?

Auf. I was moved withal.

Cor. I dare be sworn you were:
And, sir, it is no little thing to make
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,
What peace you 'll make, advise me: for my part,

I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you; and pray you,
Stand to me in this cause. O mother! wife!
Auf. [*Aside.*] I am glad thou hast set thy mercy and thy honour
At difference in thee: out of that I'll work
Myself a former fortune.
[*The Ladies make signs to Coriolanus.*
Cor. Ay, by and by;
[*To Volumnia, Virgilia, etc.*
But we will drink together; and you shall bear
A better witness back than words, which we,
On like conditions, will have counter-seal'd.
Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve
To have a temple built you: all the swords
In Italy, and her confederate arms,
Could not have made this peace. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *Rome. A public place.*

Enter Menenius *and* Sicinius.

Men. See you yon coign o' the Capitol, yon corner-stone?

Sic. Why, what of that?

Men. If it be possible for you to displace it with your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him. But I say there is no hope in't: our throats are sentenced and stay upon execution.

Sic. Is't possible that so short a time can alter the condition of a man?

Men. There is differency between a grub and a butterfly; yet your butterfly was a grub. This Marcius is grown from man to dragon: he has wings; he's more than a creeping thing.

Sic. He loved his mother dearly.

Men. So did he me: and he no more remembers his mother now than an eight-year-old horse. The tartness of his face sours ripe grapes: when he walks, he moves like an engine, and the ground shrinks before his treading: he is able to pierce a corslet with his eye; talks like a knell, and his hum is a battery. He sits in his state, as a thing made for Alexander. What he bids be done is finished with his bidding. He wants nothing of a god but eternity and a heaven to throne in.

Sic. Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

Men. I paint him in the character. Mark what mercy his mother shall bring from him: there is no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger; that shall our poor city find: and all this is long of you.

Sic. The gods be good unto us!

Men. No, in such a case the gods will not be good unto us. When we banished him, we respected not them; and, he returning to break our necks, they respect not us.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Sir, if you 'ld save your life, fly to your house:
The plebeians have got your fellow-tribune
And hale him up and down, all swearing, if
The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,
They 'll give him death by inches.

Enter a second Messenger.

Sic. What 's the news?

23. *made for*, meant to represent.

Sec. Mess. Good news, good news; the ladies
have prevail'd,
The Volscians are dislodged, and Marcius gone:
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,
No, not the expulsion of the Tarquins.
Sic. Friend,
Art thou certain this is true? is it most certain?
Sec. Mess. As certain as I know the sun is fire:
Where have you lurk'd, that you make doubt of it?
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide,
As the recomforted through the gates. Why, hark
you! [*Trumpets; hautboys; drums beat; all together.*
The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries and fifes,
Tabors and cymbals and the shouting Romans,
Make the sun dance. Hark you!
[*A shout within.*
Men. This is good news:
I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia
Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians,
A city full; of tribunes, such as you,
A sea and land full. You have pray'd well to-day:
This morning for ten thousand of your throats
I 'ld not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy!
[*Music still, with shouts.*
Sic. First, the gods bless you for your tidings; next,
Accept my thankfulness.
Sec. Mess. Sir, we have all
Great cause to give great thanks.
Sic. They are near the city?
Sec. Mess. Almost at point to enter.
Sic. We will meet them,
And help the joy. [*Exeunt.*

54. *Make the sun dance;* alluding to the belief that the sun danced on Easter Day; cf. Sir John Suckling—

she dances such a way
No sun upon an Easter Day
Is half so fine a sight.

SCENE V. *The same. A street near the gate.*

Enter two Senators *with* VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, VALERIA, etc. *passing over the stage, followed by Patricians, and others.*

First Sen. Behold our patroness, the life of Rome!
Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,
And make triumphant fires; strew flowers before them:
Unshout the noise that banish'd Marcius,
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother;
Cry 'Welcome, ladies, welcome!'
All. Welcome, ladies,
Welcome! [*A flourish with drums and trumpets. Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Antium. A public place.*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, *with* Attendants.

Auf. Go tell the lords o' the city I am here:
Deliver them this paper: having read it,
Bid them repair to the market-place; where I,
Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,
Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse
The city ports by this hath enter'd and
Intends to appear before the people, hoping
To purge himself with words: dispatch.
[*Exeunt Attendants.*

6. *ports*, gates.

Enter three or four Conspirators *of* AUFIDIUS' *faction.*

Most welcome!

First Con. How is it with our general?

Auf. Even so

As with a man by his own alms empoison'd,
And with his charity slain.

Sec. Con. Most noble sir,
If you do hold the same intent wherein
You wish'd us parties, we 'll deliver you
Of your great danger.

Auf. Sir, I cannot tell:
We must proceed as we do find the people.

Third Con. The people will remain uncertain whilst
'Twixt you there 's difference; but the fall of either
Makes the survivor heir of all.

Auf. I know it;
And my pretext to strike at him admits
A good construction. I raised him, and I pawn'd
Mine honour for his truth: who being so heighten'd,
He water'd his new plants with dews of flattery,
Seducing so my friends; and, to this end,
He bow'd his nature, never known before
But to be rough, unswayable and free.

Third Con. Sir, his stoutness
When he did stand for consul, which he lost
By lack of stooping,—

Auf. That I would have spoken of:
Being banish'd for 't, he came unto my hearth;
Presented to my knife his throat: I took him;
Made him joint-servant with me, gave him way
In all his own desires; nay, let him choose
Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,

My best and freshest men; served his designments
In mine own person; holp to reap the fame
Which he did end all his; and took some pride
To do myself this wrong: till, at the last,
I seem'd his follower, not partner, and
He waged me with his countenance, as if
I had been mercenary.

First Con. So he did, my lord:
The army marvell'd at it, and, in the last,
When he had carried Rome and that we look'd
For no less spoil than glory,—

Auf. There was it:
For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him.
At a few drops of women's rheum, which are
As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labour
Of our great action: therefore shall he die,
And I 'll renew me in his fall. But, hark!

[*Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of the People.*

First Con. Your native town you enter'd like a post,
And had no welcomes home; but he returns,
Splitting the air with noise.

Sec. Con. And patient fools,
Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear
With giving him glory.

Third Con. Therefore, at your vantage,
Ere he express himself, or move the people
With what he would say, let him feel your sword,
Which we will second. When he lies along,
After your way his tale pronounced shall bury
His reasons with his body.

35. *designments*, plans.
40. *waged me with his countenance*, rewarded me with his approbation.
50. *post*, a post-boy, who brings a message.
54. *at your vantage*, at your own convenience.

Auf. Say no more:
Here come the lords.

Enter the Lords *of the city.*

All the Lords. You are most welcome home.
Auf. I have not deserved it.
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perused
What I have written to you?
Lords. We have.
First Lord. And grieve to hear 't.
What faults he made before the last, I think
Might have found easy fines: but there to end
Where he was to begin, and give away
The benefit of our levies, answering us
With our own charge, making a treaty where
There was a yielding,—this admits no excuse.
Auf. He approaches: you shall hear him.

Enter CORIOLANUS, *marching with drum and colours; Commoners being with him.*

Cor. Hail, lords! I am return'd your soldier,
No more infected with my country's love
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting
Under your great command. You are to know
That prosperously I have attempted and
With bloody passage led your wars even to
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home
Do more than counterpoise a full third part
The charges of the action. We have made peace
With no less honour to the Antiates
Than shame to the Romans: and we here deliver,
Subscribed by the consuls and patricians,
Together with the seal o' the senate, what

67. *answering us*, etc., producing nothing but the cost of our expedition.

We have compounded on.
Auf. Read it not, noble lords;
But tell the traitor, in the high'st degree
He hath abused your powers.
Cor. Traitor! how now!
Auf. Ay, traitor, Marcius!
Cor. Marcius!
Auf. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius: dost thou think
I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name
Coriolanus in Corioli?
You lords and heads o' the state, perfidiously
He has betray'd your business, and given up,
For certain drops of salt, your city Rome,
I say 'your city,' to his wife and mother;
Breaking his oath and resolution like
A twist of rotten silk, never admitting
Counsel o' the war, but at his nurse's tears
He whined and roar'd away your victory,
That pages blush'd at him and men of heart
Look'd wondering each at other.
Cor. Hear'st thou, Mars?
Auf. Name not the god, thou boy of tears!
Cor. Ha!
Auf. No more.
Cor. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
Too great for what contains it. 'Boy'! O slave!
Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever
I was forced to scold. Your judgements, my grave lords,
Must give this cur the lie: and his own notion—
Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him; that
Must bear my beating to his grave—shall join
To thrust the lie unto him.
First Lord. Peace, both, and hear me speak.

107. *notion*, understanding.

Cor. Cut me to pieces, Volsces; men and lads,
Stain all your edges on me. 'Boy'! false hound!
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I
Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli:
Alone I did it. 'Boy'!

Auf. Why, noble lords,
Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,
Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,
'Fore your own eyes and ears?

All Consp. Let him die for 't.

All the people. 'Tear him to pieces.' 'Do it presently.' 'He killed my son.' 'My daughter.' 'He killed my cousin Marcus.' 'He killed my father.'

Sec. Lord. Peace, ho! no outrage: peace!
The man is noble and his fame folds in
This orb o' the earth. His last offences to us
Shall have judicious hearing. Stand, Aufidius,
And trouble not the peace.

Cor. O that I had him,
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe,
To use my lawful sword!

Auf. Insolent villain!

All Consp. Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!

[*The Conspirators draw, and kill Coriolanus: Aufidius stands on his body.*

Lords. Hold, hold, hold, hold!

Auf. My noble masters, hear me speak.

First Lord. O Tullus,—

Sec. Lord. Thou hast done a deed whereat valour will weep.

Third Lord. Tread not upon him. Masters all, be quiet;
Put up your swords.

128. *judicious*, judicial, lawful.

Auf. My lords, when you shall know—as in this rage,
Provoked by him, you cannot—the great danger
Which this man's life did owe you, you 'll rejoice
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours
To call me to your senate, I 'll deliver
Myself your loyal servant, or endure
Your heaviest censure.
First Lord. Bear from hence his body;
And mourn you for him: let him be regarded
As the most noble corse that ever herald
Did follow to his urn.
Sec. Lord. His own impatience
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.
Let 's make the best of it.
Auf. My rage is gone;
And I am struck with sorrow. Take him up.
Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers; I 'll be one.
Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully:
Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,
Which to this hour bewail the injury,
Yet he shall have a noble memory.
Assist. [*Exeunt, bearing the body of Coriolanus. A dead march sounded.*

139. *did owe you*, made you liable to.

TIMON OF ATHENS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

TIMON, of Athens

LUCIUS,
LUCULLUS,
SEMPRONIUS, } flattering lords.

VENTIDIUS, one of Timon's false friends.
ALCIBIADES, an Athenian captain.
APEMANTUS, a churlish philosopher.
FLAVIUS, steward to Timon.
Poet, Painter, Jeweller, and Merchant.
An old Athenian.

FLAMINIUS,
LUCILIUS,
SERVILIUS, } servants to Timon.

CAPHIS,
PHILOTUS,
TITUS,
LUCIUS,
HORTENSIUS,
And others. } servants to Timon's creditors.

A Page. A Fool. Three Strangers.

PHRYNIA,
TIMANDRA, } mistresses to Alcibiades.

Cupid and Amazons in the mask.
Other Lords, Senators, Officers, Soldiers, Banditti, and Attendants

SCENE: *Athens, and the neighbouring woods.*

DURATION OF TIME

Dramatic Time.—Six days with one interval.

Day 1. I. 1., 2.
,, 2. II. 1., 2.; III. 1.-3.
,, 3. III. 4.-6.; IV. 1., 2.
Interval.
,, 4. IV. 3.
,, 5. V. 1., 2.
,, 6. V. 3., 4.

Historic Time.—414 B.C. was the date of Alcibiades' disgrace.

INTRODUCTION

The Lyfe of Timon of Athens was first printed in the Folio of 1623, as the fourth of the Tragedies. It is there divided neither into Acts nor Scenes, and the text is very corrupt.

It is now generally agreed that large tracts of *Timon* are not the work of Shakespeare. The following table gives a conspectus of the most currently accepted division, and of the resulting distribution of the characters :—

	Shakespeare.	Not Shakespeare.
Act I. 1.	Painter, Poet. Timon. Old Athenian. ? Apemantus, 257 f.	189 f. Timon, Apemantus. (Except 249-265; 283-294 ?).
2.		Banquet. Apemantus. Masque.
,, II. 1.		Senator, Caphis.
2.	1-44. Timon, Flavius.	45. Apemantus, Fool.
,, III. 1.-4.		Timon's friends and his servants. Alcibiades and the Senate.
5.		
6.	98-115. Timon's denunciation of his guests.	Timon's banquet (exc. 98-115).
,, IV. 1.	Timon.	
2.	Timon's servants; Flavius (exc. 30-50).	30-50. Flavius.
3.	Timon. Alcibiades.	291-361. Timon and Apemantus.
	Apemantus.	454-543. Timon and Flavius.

	Shakespeare.	Not Shakespeare.
Act V.	1. 60 f. Poet and Painter and Timon.	1-59. Poet and Painter.
	2.	Senators.
	3.	Alcibiades' soldiers.
	4. Alcibiades before Athens.	

This division rests partly upon glaring diversities of style, partly on inconsistencies of treatment. Thus Apemantus in Timon's house plays in i. 2. the cynic he is; whereas in i. 1. 58 the poet tells how 'even he drops down the knee before him and returns in peace most rich in Timon's nod.' The unknown writer was a capable playwright, and a facile, even brilliant writer. But it is generally easy to distinguish his rhetorical verse—which tends to run sporadically into rhymed couplets—from the close-packed, pregnant verses of Shakespeare. Contrast, for instance, the two pieces of declamation not dissimilar in mood—Timon's in iv. 1. and Flavius' in iv. 2. 30-50.

These discrepancies did not escape the critics of the last century. But they were commonly satisfied to attribute them to careless printers or copyists. The view that it was an incomplete drama, with certain scenes fully worked out, others left in the first draft, was urged with great ingenuity by Ulrici and Kreyssig.[1] Knight first put forward the hypothesis that Shakespeare was reworking an old play; and Delius, after demolishing this view in his first critical essay,[2] resuscitated it twenty years later (1866)[3] with all the resources of his mature scholarship. But Delius' acuteness only brought out the difficulties of his hypothesis. For the more glaring

[1] Cf. also an elaborate but somewhat uncritical paper by W. Wendlandt, *Jahrbuch*, xxiii. 107 f.

[2] *Die Tieck'sche Shakspere-kritik*, 1849.

[3] 'Über Shakespeare's Timon of Athens' (*Jahrbuch*, ii. 335).

the incongruity, the harder it became to explain how Shakespeare had permitted it to pass. Two years after Delius' essay, accordingly, B. Tschischwitz came forward with the opposite view that Timon was a Shakespearean sketch subsequently completed. This view has been developed, in his own way, by Mr. Fleay, and now prevails in England. In Germany, though widely accepted, it has less completely triumphed over (i.). The defenders of (i.) have successfully maintained the general coherence of the plot against the disintegrating analysis of Delius; but they fail in the discrimination of style. Whole scenes of *Timon* show no vestige of Shakespeare's manner at any period. The defenders of (ii.) had an apparently strong argument in the fact that *Timon* betrays a knowledge of classical sources not then translated into English, as also that there are slight signs of an older Timon play accessible to Shakespeare.[1] But an argument founded on Shakespeare's ignorance of Latin and of French must always be extremely hazardous, and Lucian's *Timon* had been translated into both. Lucian's influence is apparent (as will be seen below) not only in isolated passages, but in the fundamental features of the plot,—in the conception of scenes absolutely Shakespearean in execution; while he foreshadowed far more nearly than any other accessible

[1] Timon the man-hater was a popular by-word some years before Shakespeare's play. Cf. Guilpin's *Skialetheia* (1598): 'Like hate-man Timon in his cell he sits,' and *Jack Drum's Entertainment* (1601): 'But if all the brewers jades in the town can draw me from the love of myself they shall do more than eer the seven wise men of Greece could. Come, come, now I 'll be as sociable as Timon of Athens.' Shakespeare himself had spoken of 'critic Timon' in *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 170. The MS. play *Timon* (about 1600) was evidently written for an academic audience. It is most unlikely that Shakespeare ever heard of it. It was edited by Dyce for the Shakspere Society, and reprinted in Hazlitt's *Shakspere's Library*, vol. vi.

version the character of Shakespeare's Timon. No one can assert that Shakespeare had not an older Timon play before him; but the hypothesis explains nothing that is not as easily explained without it. On the other hand, there are evidences that while Shakespeare probably shaped out Timon for himself, he left it incomplete. Notably, the epitaph of Timon (v. 4. 70-73) is an agglomerate of two separate epitaphs recorded by Plutarch, which Shakespeare cannot have intended to combine without change,—the one (v. 4. 70, 71), written by Timon himself, the other (v. 4. 72, 73), according to ancient tradition, by Callimachus. However this happened, it is evident that our text reproduces an unfinished draft MS. of Shakespeare's (for this scene is certainly his) with the two inconsistent epitaphs jotted down together as alternatives for a future decision never made.

Of the revising 'second author' nothing definite can be said;[1] and of the circumstances of the revision equally little.[2] But he cannot be shown to have introduced any motive not implied in Shakespeare's work. The banishment of Alcibiades (iii. 5.) is the ground of his hostile return (v. 4.). The futile missions of Timon's servants to his friends (iii. 1.-4.) only carry out the operations already arranged in ii. 2.

The date of the Shakespearean *Timon* can only be conjectured from somewhat insecure æsthetic

[1] Mr. Fleay, by exhausting the list of contemporary writers of requisite ability, identifies him with Cyril Tourneur. The temerity of this procedure needs no comment.

[2] It has been variously suggested that Shakespeare's fragment was completed for stage purposes, and for publication in the Folio. Irregularities in the pagination of the Folio have been thought to point to hurried insertion of this play, and so perhaps to delays caused by literary manipulation of the MS. But the pagination of the Folio is far too irregular elsewhere to justify such inferences.

criteria. It belongs, in the cast and temper of its tragedy, as also in verse structure, unmistakably to the period of *Macbeth* and *Coriolanus* (1606-8); its fragmentary condition, and the decay it evinces in purely dramatic vigour, suggest that it was the last of the Tragedies, and marks the exhaustion of Shakespeare's tragic vein. *Pericles*, which was printed in 1609, and *Cymbeline*, which appeared later still, though classed as tragedies, adventure into totally different regions of tragic effect: it is plausible to suppose that *Timon* preceded this new departure, *i.e.* was not later than 1608. This is supported by its close connexion in subject with the Plutarchian tragedies of 1607-8; Timon and Alcibiades being Plutarchian parallels to Antony and Coriolanus.

Plutarch told the story of Timon as a digression in his *Life of Mark Antony*. Shakespeare also knew it as told by Painter in the *Palace of Pleasure* (Novella 28). Both versions are little more than anecdotes, and relate only to the second phase of Timon's career,—the morose seclusion of the misanthrope near Athens, his encounters with Apemantus and Alcibiades, his ironical invitation to his countrymen to hang themselves on his fig-tree 'before it be cut down.' Plutarch alone intimates in passing that his hatred of men arose from 'the unthankfulness of those he had done good unto, and whom he took to be his friends.' Apemantus is a man 'of the very same nature' whom he 'sometimes would have in his company.' When the Athenians held festival the two cynics feasted together by themselves. Apemantus said: 'O here is a trim banquet, Timon.' Timon answered, 'Yea, so thou wert not here.' Alcibiades on the contrary Timon would 'make much of, and kissed him very gladly.' When asked why he singled him out for favour from the rest of men: 'I do it,'

said he, 'because I know that one day he shall do great mischief unto the Athenians.' He died a natural death, and ordered his body to be buried upon the sea-shore, 'that the waves and surges might beat and vex his dead carcass.'

There is little doubt that in addition to these meagre anecdotes, Shakespeare knew, directly or indirectly, the lively dialogue in which Lucian makes Timon's story the vehicle of a satire upon ill-used wealth.[1] Here also his prodigal days are only referred to: we see him at the outset, a ruined man, squalid, ragged, unkempt, on the slopes of Hymettus, hurling maledictions, as he stoops over his spade, at Zeus, who, in spite of the praises of poets and the sacrifices of the devout, allows his thunderbolts to rust while crime grows rampant. Hermes explains that this Timon is one who has been 'ruined, one may say, by his honesty, generosity, and pity for the poor, but in fact by his foolish heedlessness in choosing, as the recipients of his bounty, crows and wolves and vultures.' Zeus recalls the bountiful sacrifices offered by Timon, and resolves to send Plutus ('Wealth') to his aid. Plutus finds him in the company of Poverty and Wisdom, and is at first rudely dismissed, but finally persuades him to accept riches once more. His pick presently unearths a mass of treasure, he buys a plot of land, and builds a tower to hold it. Having thus secured a financial basis, he proceeds to shape his life on the principles of misanthropy. His code of morals includes such precepts as 'to be his

[1] Lucian's works were not translated into English in Shakespeare's lifetime. But Latin, French, and Italian translations were available. Tschischwitz (*Jahrbuch*, iv. 196) has pointed out a sign that a French or Italian text lay before the English dramatist (or one of them) in the term solidares for the coins offered by Lucullus to Flaminius (iii. 1. 46).

own neighbour, to love above all names that of a misanthrope, and if any man implores him to put out his burning house, to extinguish it with oil and pitch.' Presently the flattering friends of old arrive. Gnathonides, who had lately offered him a rope when he begged a dinner, now approaches him with a copy of dithyrambs. Timon's pick provides him with occasion for an elegy. Philiades, who had had from Timon two talents for his daughter's dowry, meets a similar reception. Then the orator Demeas comes to extol his victory in the Olympic games ('where I never attended even as a spectator,' interjects Timon), and to announce splendid honours to be paid him by the State. Finally Timon drives off his assailants with stones. Lucian's dialogue evidently comes nearer to the drama than either Plutarch or Painter. The entire scheme of the plot is already there, and the germ of Timon's character; his fierce invective against his countrymen on the completion of his ruin (cf. iv. 1.), his discovery of gold, the visits of the flattering friends and their discomfiture. What is more, the character of Timon himself first became a subject for tragedy when Lucian turned Plutarch's surly cynic, who talked misanthropy over a dinner-table with another surly cynic, into the frantic railer of Hymettus. Plutarch's Timon suffers from ingratitude; Lucian emphasises far more distinctly his blind credulity. But Lucian, pure satirist as he was, missed the fuller significance of his own invention; and in his zest for the exposure of wealthy misanthropes, made Timon abruptly change his ground, and substitute for a misanthropy founded on hatred of wealth one founded on avarice. He is the last man to make missiles of his gold hoard. It was reserved for Shakespeare to make Timon express his hatred for men by hurling the deadliest of evils at their heads.

It is easy to see that the story of Timon must have interested Shakespeare, in 1609, at a point all but wholly ignored in all these narratives. The tragic disillusion of a noble, expansive, and confiding nature, finding vent in half-frenzied invective against the world, had been exhibited with the utmost intellectual intensity in *Hamlet*, and with the utmost sublimity in *Lear*. There is a vein of misanthropy in both; but neither this nor any other formula comes near to defining either: it marks an approach to hardness and formalism in Shakespeare's conception of character that his Timon is adequately summed up in the label he adopts: 'I am Misanthropos, and hate mankind.' Lear is on the whole his nearest Shakespearean analogue. The sting of ingratitude is the common provocation of both; and in both its maddening effect is enhanced by naïve ignorance of men and equally naïve exaggeration of their own claims. Both are simple natures, finely gifted, but quite without subtlety and penetration; a single shock throws them off their balance. But Lear is testy, self-indulgent, arrogant and exacting from the first; while Timon is quixotically generous, and thinks his honour concerned to give more than is asked, and to repay tenfold what he receives. Lear's most imperious ethical instinct is that of the primitive Northern tribe—the duty of children to parent; Timon's is that of the philosophic schools and society of Athens—the duty of friend to friend. The Greek maxim of communism among friends (*κοινὰ τὰ φίλων*) is actually put into his mouth (i. 2. 104). In the Athens of Timon this noble communism is as dead as the duty of children in the heart of Regan. His disillusion, as terrible as Lear's, and far nearer, in kind, to common experience, is far less real, and is worked out with gravely diminished dramatic resource. His monologues, close packed,

knotty with phrase, but unbroken in their sombre monotony, take the place of the wonderfully varied and modulated temper of Lear. His anger pursues its way like a torrent, without pause or change. It is more penetrated than Lear's with the hunger for moral retribution, and the discovery of the gold puts the instrument of it in his grasp—the

> damned earth,
> Thou common whore of mankind, that put'st odds
> Among the rout of nations, I will make thee
> Do thy right nature.

Of Timon's series of vindictive encounters before his cave, little but the idea is probably ultimately due to Lucian. The poet may be foreshadowed in Gnathonides, the envoys of repentant Athens in Demeas. But Flavius, the one honest man, is Shakespeare's characteristic creation, and in Apemantus and Alcibiades he adapted to the scheme of Lucian the suggestive hints of Plutarch. In Plutarch both figure only as the companions of Timon's misanthropic days, the one his fellow cynic, the other his destined avenger upon Athens. Shakespeare introduced both into the picture of Timon's prodigal festivities. The misanthrope by nature was thus set in sharp contrast with the misanthrope by disillusion, and the ground was laid for their encounter in the second part (iv. 3. 198 f.) with its profoundly imagined discrimination between the set hatred grounded in habit and creed and that kindled by fresh conviction, the misanthropy which is a form of intellectual self-indulgence, and that which is goaded with poignant memories. The Apemantus of the earlier Acts is obviously modelled on the cynic Diogenes, whose feats of ὕβρις were a commonplace, and had already, in Lyly's *Campaspe*, amused the Elizabethan stage. Apemantus tramples on the pride of Timon as Diogenes on the pride of Plato.

Far less has been made of Alcibiades. The under-plot in which he figures is conceived in Shakespeare's manner, but its execution suggests imitation. The great soldier, banished by his fellow-citizens in spite of his services, who avenges his wrongs not with the spoken daggers of Timon, but with energetic military reprisals, plays the part of Coriolanus, but plays it in the simple, straightforward temper of Fortinbras. The scene of his banishment (iii. 5.) is as remote in passion and force from the great climax of the Roman play as it is proximate in motive. In the closing scene—his vengeful return—the Coriolanus motive is still visible; but Fortinbras predominates. Alcibiades announces his impending vengeance to the trembling senators; but he is a gentle conqueror, and returns, with facile accommodation, to the citizenship of the 'coward and lascivious town' whose baseness had provoked Timon's annihilating hatred, as the Norwegian prince succeeds, blithe and high-hearted, to the rule of the rotten Denmark that had blasted the genius of Hamlet.

TIMON OF ATHENS

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Athens. A hall in Timon's house.*

Enter Poet, Painter, Jeweller, Merchant, *and others, at several doors.*

Poet. Good day, sir.
Pain. I am glad you 're well.
Poet. I have not seen you long: how goes the world?
Pain. It wears, sir, as it grows.
Poet. Ay, that 's well known:
But what particular rarity? what strange,
Which manifold recórd not matches? See,
Magic of bounty! all these spirits thy power
Hath conjured to attend. I know the merchant.
Pain. I know them both; th' other 's a jeweller.
Mer. O, 'tis a worthy lord.
Jew. Nay, that 's most fix'd.
Mer. A most incomparable man, breathed, as it were,
To an untirable and continuate goodness:
He passes.

10. *breathed*, exercised.

Jew. I have a jewel here—

Mer. O, pray, let 's see 't: for the Lord Timon, sir?

Jew. If he will touch the estimate: but, for that—

Poet. [*Reciting to himself*] 'When we for recompense have praised the vile,
It stains the glory in that happy verse
Which aptly sings the good.'

Mer. 'Tis a good form.
[*Looking at the jewel.*

Jew. And rich: here is a water, look ye.

Pain. You are rapt, sir, in some work, some dedication
To the great lord.

Poet. A thing slipp'd idly from me.
Our poesy is as a gum, which oozes
From whence 'tis nourish'd: the fire i' the flint
Shows not till it be struck; our gentle flame
Provokes itself and like the current flies
Each bound it chafes. What have you there?

Pain. A picture, sir. When comes your book forth?

Poet. Upon the heels of my presentment, sir.
Let 's see your piece.

Pain. 'Tis a good piece.

Poet. So 'tis: this comes off well and excellent.

Pain. Indifferent.

Poet. Admirable: how this grace
Speaks his own standing! what a mental power
This eye shoots forth! how big imagination
Moves in this lip! to the dumbness of the gesture

30. *how this grace*, etc. The poet speaks with the preciosity of art-coteries. He possibly means: 'How vividly the grace of the portrait expresses that of the man himself, on which it is founded.'

One might interpret.

Pain. It is a pretty mocking of the life.
Here is a touch; is 't good?

Poet. I will say of it,
It tutors nature: artificial strife
Lives in these touches, livelier than life.

Enter certain Senators, *and pass over.*

Pain. How this lord is follow'd!

Poet. The senators of Athens: happy man! 40

Pain. Look, more!

Poet. You see this confluence, this great flood of visitors.
I have, in this rough work, shaped out a man,
Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hug
With amplest entertainment: my free drift
Halts not particularly, but moves itself
In a wide sea of wax: no levell'd malice
Infects one comma in the course I hold;
But flies an eagle flight, bold and forth on,
Leaving no tract behind. 50

Pain. How shall I understand you?

Poet. I will unbolt to you.
You see how all conditions, how all minds,
As well of glib and slippery creatures as
Of grave and austere quality, tender down
Their services to Lord Timon: his large fortune
Upon his good and gracious nature hanging

44. *beneath*, under.

45. *my free drift*, etc., my spontaneous tribute is not a straggling isolated current of opinion, but moves in consort with a tide of literary eulogy.—The poet's affected jargon is obscure to his hearer, as the painter's question shows. Its interpretation is not free from doubt. Ingleby and Littledale take 'sea of wax' to mean a *flood*-tide ('he *waxed* like a sea,' *Cor.* ii. 2. 103); I cannot believe this. 'A sea of wax' would be as natural an expression in the days of tablets as a sea of ink in ours.

47. *levell'd*, intended.

50. *tract*, trace.

Subdues and properties to his love and tendance
All sorts of hearts ; yea, from the glass-faced flatterer
To Apemantus, that few things loves better
Than to abhor himself: even he drops down
The knee before him and returns in peace
Most rich in Timon's nod.

Pain. I saw them speak together.

Poet. Sir, I have upon a high and pleasant hill
Feign'd Fortune to be throned: the base o' the mount
Is rank'd with all deserts, all kind of natures,
That labour on the bosom of this sphere
To propagate their states: amongst them all,
Whose eyes are on this sovereign lady fix'd,
One do I personate of Lord Timon's frame,
Whom Fortune with her ivory hand wafts to her;
Whose present grace to present slaves and servants
Translates his rivals.

Pain. 'Tis conceived to scope.
This throne, this Fortune, and this hill, methinks,
With one man beckon'd from the rest below,
Bowing his head against the steepy mount
To climb his happiness, would be well express'd
In our condition.

Poet. Nay, sir, but hear me on.
All those which were his fellows but of late,
Some better than his value, on the moment
Follow his strides, his lobbies fill with tendance,
Rain sacrificial whisperings in his ear,
Make sacred even his stirrup, and through him
Drink the free air.

Pain. Ay, marry, what of these?

Poet. When Fortune in her shift and change of mood

72. *to scope*, to the purpose.

Spurns down her late beloved, all his dependants
Which labour'd after him to the mountain's top
Even on their knees and hands, let him slip down,
Not one accompanying his declining foot.
Pain. 'Tis common:
A thousand moral paintings I can show
That shall demonstrate these quick blows of Fortune's
More pregnantly than words. Yet you do well
To show Lord Timon that mean eyes have seen
The foot above the head.

Trumpets sound. Enter LORD TIMON, *addressing himself courteously to every suitor; a* Messenger *from* VENTIDIUS *talking with him;* LUCILIUS *and other servants following.*

Tim. Imprison'd is he, say you?
Mess. Ay, my good lord: five talents is his debt,
His means most short, his creditors most strait:
Your honourable letter he desires
To those have shut him up; which failing,
Periods his comfort.
Tim. Noble Ventidius! Well;
I am not of that feather to shake off
My friend when he must need me. I do know him
A gentleman that well deserves a help:
Which he shall have: I'll pay the debt, and free him.
Mess. Your lordship ever binds him.
Tim. Commend me to him: I will send his ransom;

99. *Periods,* cuts short.

And being enfranchised, bid him come to me:
'Tis not enough to help the feeble up,
But to support him after. Fare you well.
Mess. All happiness to your honour! [*Exit.*

Enter an old Athenian.

Old Ath. Lord Timon, hear me speak.
Tim. Freely, good father.
Old Ath. Thou hast a servant named Lucilius.
Tim. I have so: what of him?
Old Ath. Most noble Timon, call the man before thee.
Tim. Attends he here, or no? Lucilius!
Luc. Here, at your lordship's service.
Old Ath. This fellow here, Lord Timon, this thy creature,
By night frequents my house. I am a man
That from my first have been inclined to thrift,
And my estate deserves an heir more raised
Than one which holds a trencher.
Tim. Well; what further?
Old Ath. One only daughter have I, no kin else,
On whom I may confer what I have got:
The maid is fair, o' the youngest for a bride,
And I have bred her at my dearest cost
In qualities of the best. This man of thine
Attempts her love: I prithee, noble lord,
Join with me to forbid him her resort;
Myself have spoke in vain.
Tim. The man is honest.
Old Ath. Therefore he will be, Timon:

129. *Therefore he will be, Timon.* The line has been suspected; but Coleridge's explanation is probably correct, —he is honest for the sake of being honest, not in hope of some other reward, as *e.g.* in this case to win a wife.

His honesty rewards him in itself;
It must not bear my daughter.
Tim. Does she love him?
Old Ath. She is young and apt:
Our own precedent passions do instruct us
What levity 's in youth.
Tim. [*To Lucilius*] Love you the maid?
Luc. Ay, my good lord, and she accepts of it.
Old Ath. If in her marriage my consent be missing,
I call the gods to witness, I will choose
Mine heir from forth the beggars of the world,
And dispossess her all.
Tim. How shall she be endow'd,
If she be mated with an equal husband?
Old Ath. Three talents on the present; in future, all.
Tim. This gentleman of mine hath served me long:
To build his fortune I will strain a little,
For 'tis a bond in men. Give him thy daughter:
What you bestow, in him I 'll counterpoise,
And make him weigh with her.
Old Ath. Most noble lord,
Pawn me to this your honour, she is his.
Tim. My hand to thee; mine honour on my promise.
Luc. Humbly I thank your lordship: never may
That state or fortune fall into my keeping,
Which is not owed to you!
[*Exeunt Lucilius and Old Athenian.*
Poet. Vouchsafe my labour, and long live your lordship!
Tim. I thank you; you shall hear from me anon:
Go not away. What have you there, my friend?

Pain. A piece of painting, which I do beseech
Your lordship to accept.
Tim. Painting is welcome.
The painting is almost the natural man;
For since dishonour traffics with man's nature,
He is but outside: these pencill'd figures are
Even such as they give out. I like your work;
And you shall find I like it: wait attendance
Till you hear further from me.
Pain. The gods preserve ye!
Tim. Well fare you, gentleman: give me your hand;
We must needs dine together. Sir, your jewel
Hath suffer'd under praise.
Jew. What, my lord! dispraise?
Tim. A mere satiety of commendations.
If I should pay you for't as 'tis extoll'd,
It would unclew me quite.
Jew. My lord, 'tis rated
As those which sell would give: but you well know,
Things of like value differing in the owners
Are prized by their masters: believe 't, dear lord,
You mend the jewel by the wearing it.
Tim. Well mock'd.
Mer. No, my good lord; he speaks the common tongue,
Which all men speak with him.
Tim. Look, who comes here: will you be chid?

Enter APEMANTUS.

Jew. We'll bear, with your lordship.
Mer. He'll spare none.
Tim. Good morrow to thee, gentle Apemantus!
Apem. Till I be gentle, stay thou for thy good morrow;

168. *unclew*, unwind, *i.e.* strip bare.

When thou art Timon's dog, and these knaves honest.

Tim. Why dost thou call them knaves? thou know'st them not.

Apem. Are they not Athenians?

Tim. Yes.

Apem. Then I repent not.

Jew. You know me, Apemantus?

Apem. Thou know'st I do; I call'd thee by thy name.

Tim. Thou art proud, Apemantus.

Apem. Of nothing so much as that I am not like Timon.

Tim. Whither art going?

Apem. To knock out an honest Athenian's brains.

Tim. That 's a deed thou 'lt die for.

Apem. Right, if doing nothing be death by the law.

Tim. How likest thou this picture, Apemantus?

Apem. The best, for the innocence.

Tim. Wrought he not well that painted it?

Apem. He wrought better that made the painter; and yet he 's but a filthy piece of work.

Pain. You 're a dog.

Apem. Thy mother 's of my generation: what 's she, if I be a dog?

Tim. Wilt dine with me, Apemantus?

Apem. No; I eat not lords.

Tim. An thou shouldst, thou 'ldst anger ladies.

Apem. O, they eat lords; so they come by great bellies.

Tim. That 's a lascivious apprehension.

Apem. So thou apprehendest it: take it for thy labour.

Tim. How dost thou like this jewel, Apemantus?

Apem. Not so well as plain-dealing, which will not cost a man a doit.

Tim. What dost thou think 'tis worth?

Apem. Not worth my thinking. How now, poet!

Poet. How now, philosopher!

Apem. Thou liest.

Poet. Art not one?

Apem. Yes.

Poet. Then I lie not.

Apem. Art not a poet?

Poet. Yes.

Apem. Then thou liest: look in thy last work, where thou hast feigned him a worthy fellow.

Poet. That 's not feigned; he is so.

Apem. Yes, he is worthy of thee, and to pay thee for thy labour: he that loves to be flattered is worthy o' the flatterer. Heavens, that I were a lord!

Tim. What wouldst do then, Apemantus?

Apem. E'en as Apemantus does now; hate a lord with my heart.

Tim. What, thyself?

Apem. Ay.

Tim. Wherefore?

Apem. That I had no angry wit to be a lord. Art not thou a merchant?

Mer. Ay, Apemantus.

Apem. Traffic confound thee, if the gods will not!

Mer. If traffic do it, the gods do it.

Apem. Traffic 's thy god; and thy god confound thee!

241. Of the many conjectured emendations perhaps the best is the anonymous, 'That I had no ampler wit than be a lord.'

Trumpet sounds. Enter a Messenger.

Tim. What trumpet 's that ?

Mess. 'Tis Alcibiades, and some twenty horse,
All of companionship.

Tim. Pray, entertain them ; give them guide to us. [*Exeunt some Attendants.*
You must needs dine with me : go not you hence
Till I have thank'd you : when dinner 's done,
Show me this piece. I am joyful of your sights.

Enter Alcibiades, *with the rest.*

Most welcome, sir !

Apem. So, so, there !
Aches contract and starve your supple joints !
That there should be small love 'mongst these sweet knaves,
And all this courtesy ! The strain of man 's bred out
Into baboon and monkey.

Alcib. Sir, you have saved my longing, and I feed
Most hungerly on your sight.

Tim. Right welcome, sir !
Ere we depart, we 'll share a bounteous time
In different pleasures. Pray you, let us in.
[*Exeunt all except Apemantus.*

Enter two Lords.

First Lord. What time o' day is 't, Apemantus ?

Apem. Time to be honest.

First Lord. That time serves still.

Apem. The more accursed thou, that still omitt'st it.

Sec. Lord. Thou art going to Lord Timon's feast ?

Apem. Ay, to see meat fill knaves and wine heat fools.

Sec. Lord. Fare thee well, fare thee well.

Apem. Thou art a fool to bid me farewell twice.

Sec. Lord. Why, Apemantus?

Apem. Shouldst have kept one to thyself, for I mean to give thee none.

First Lord. Hang thyself!

Apem. No, I will do nothing at thy bidding: make thy requests to thy friend.

Sec. Lord. Away, unpeaceable dog, or I'll spurn thee hence! 280

Apem. I will fly, like a dog, the heels o' the ass. [*Exit.*

First Lord. He 's opposite to humanity. Come, shall we in,
And taste Lord Timon's bounty? he outgoes
The very heart of kindness.

Sec. Lord. He pours it out; Plutus, the god of gold,
Is but his steward: no meed, but he repays
Sevenfold above itself; no gift to him,
But breeds the giver a return exceeding 290
All use of quittance.

First Lord. The noblest mind he carries
That ever govern'd man.

Sec. Lord. Long may he live in fortunes! Shall we in?

First Lord. I'll keep you company.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A banqueting-room in Timon's house.*

Hautboys playing loud music. A great banquet served in; FLAVIUS *and others attending; then enter* LORD TIMON, ALCIBIADES, Lords, Senators, *and* VENTIDIUS. *Then comes, dropping after all,* APEMANTUS, *discontentedly, like himself.*

Ven. Most honour'd Timon,
It hath pleased the gods to remember my father's age,
And call him to long peace.
He is gone happy, and has left me rich:
Then, as in grateful virtue I am bound
To your free heart, I do return those talents,
Doubled with thanks and service, from whose help
I derived liberty.

Tim. O, by no means,
Honest Ventidius; you mistake my love:
I gave it freely ever; and there's none
Can truly say he gives, if he receives:
If our betters play at that game, we must not dare
To imitate them; faults that are rich are fair.

Ven. A noble spirit!

Tim. Nay, my lords,
[*They all stand ceremoniously looking on Timon.*
Ceremony was but devised at first
To set a gloss on faint deeds, hollow welcomes,
Recanting goodness, sorry ere 'tis shown;
But where there is true friendship, there needs none.
Pray, sit; more welcome are ye to my fortunes
Than my fortunes to me. [*They sit.*

First Lord. My lord, we always have confess'd it.

Apem. Ho, ho, confess'd it! hang'd it, have you not?

Tim. O, Apemantus, you are welcome.

Apem. No;

You shall not make me welcome:
I come to have thee thrust me out of doors.

Tim. Fie, thou 'rt a churl; ye 've got a humour there
Does not become a man; 'tis much to blame.
They say, my lords, 'ira furor brevis est;' but yond man is ever angry. Go, let him have a table by himself; for he does neither affect company, nor is he fit for 't, indeed.

Apem. Let me stay at thine apperil, Timon:
I come to observe; I give thee warning on 't.

Tim. I take no heed of thee; thou 'rt an Athenian, therefore welcome: I myself would have no power; prithee, let my meat make thee silent.

Apem. I scorn thy meat; 'twould choke me, for I should ne'er flatter thee. O you gods, what a number of men eat Timon, and he sees 'em not! It grieves me to see so many dip their meat in one man's blood; and all the madness is, he cheers them up too.
I wonder men dare trust themselves with men:
Methinks they should invite them without knives;
Good for their meat, and safer for their lives.
There 's much example for 't; the fellow that sits next him now, parts bread with him, pledges the breath of him in a divided draught, is the readiest man to kill him: 't has been proved. If I were a huge man, I should fear to drink at meals;

32. *apperil*, peril.
45. *without knives*, it was the custom for guests to bring their knives with them.

Lest they should spy my windpipe's dangerous notes:
Great men should drink with harness on their throats.

Tim. My lord, in heart; and let the health go round.

Sec. Lord. Let it flow this way, my good lord.

Apem. Flow this way! A brave fellow! he keeps his tides well. Those healths will make thee and thy state look ill, Timon. Here 's that which is too weak to be a sinner, honest water, which ne'er left man i' the mire:
This and my food are equals; there 's no odds:
Feasts are too proud to give thanks to the gods.

Apemantus' grace.

Immortal gods, I crave no pelf;
I pray for no man but myself:
Grant I may never prove so fond,
To trust man on his oath or bond;
Or a harlot, for her weeping;
Or a dog, that seems a-sleeping;
Or a keeper with my freedom;
Or my friends, if I should need 'em.
Amen. So fall to 't:
Rich men sin, and I eat root.

[*Eats and drinks.*

Much good dich thy good heart, Apemantus!

Tim. Captain Alcibiades, your heart 's in the field now.

Alcib. My heart is ever at your service, my lord.

Tim. You had rather be at a breakfast of enemies than a dinner of friends.

Alcib. So they were bleeding-new, my lord,

53. *harness*, armour. 73. *dich*, a corruption of 'do it.'

there's no meat like 'em: I could wish my best friend at such a feast.

Apem. Would all those flatterers were thine enemies then, that then thou mightst kill 'em and bid me to 'em!

First Lord. Might we but have that happiness, my lord, that you would once use our hearts, whereby we might express some part of our zeals, we should think ourselves for ever perfect.

Tim. O, no doubt, my good friends, but the gods themselves have provided that I shall have much help from you: how had you been my friends else? why have you that charitable title from thousands, did not you chiefly belong to my heart? I have told more of you to myself than you can with modesty speak in your own behalf; and thus far I confirm you. O you gods, think I, what need we have any friends, if we should ne'er have need of 'em? they were the most needless creatures living, should we ne'er have use for 'em, and would most resemble sweet instruments hung up in cases that keep their sounds to themselves. Why, I have often wished myself poorer, that I might come nearer to you. We are born to do benefits: and what better or properer can we call our own than the riches of our friends? O, what a precious comfort 'tis, to have so many, like brothers, commanding one another's fortunes! O joy, e'en made away ere 't can be born! Mine eyes cannot hold out water, methinks: to forget their faults, I drink to you.

Apem. Thou weepest to make them drink, Timon.

Sec. Lord. Joy had the like conception in our eyes
And at that instant like a babe sprung up.

Apem. Ho, ho! I laugh to think that babe a bastard.

Third Lord. I promise you, my lord, you moved me much.

Apem. Much! [*Tucket, within.*

Tim. What means that trump?

Enter a Servant.

How now?

Serv. Please you, my lord, there are certain ladies most desirous of admittance.

Tim. Ladies! what are their wills?

Serv. There comes with them a forerunner, my lord, which bears that office, to signify their pleasures.

Tim. I pray, let them be admitted.

Enter CUPID.

Cup. Hail to thee, worthy Timon, and to all
That of his bounties taste! The five best senses
Acknowledge thee their patron; and come freely
To gratulate thy plenteous bosom: th' ear,
Taste, touch and smell, pleased from thy table rise;
They only now come but to feast thine eyes.

Tim. They 're welcome all; let 'em have kind admittance:
Music, make their welcome! [*Exit Cupid.*

First Lord. You see, my lord, how ample you 're beloved.

Music. *Re-enter* CUPID, *with a mask of* Ladies *as Amazons, with lutes in their hands, dancing and playing.*

Apem. Hoy-day, what a sweep of vanity comes this way!

136. *a mask of Ladies.* The disguise, by members of the Masques, or entertainments in Court, were in full vogue at

They dance! they are mad women.
Like madness is the glory of this life,
As this pomp shows to a little oil and root.
We make ourselves fools, to disport ourselves,
And spend our flatteries, to drink those men
Upon whose age we void it up again,
With poisonous spite and envy.
Who lives that 's not depraved or depraves?
Who dies, that bears not one spurn to their graves
Of their friends' gift?
I should fear those that dance before me now
Would one day stamp upon me: 't has been done;
Men shut their doors against a setting sun.

The Lords *rise from table, with much adoring of* TIMON; *and to show their loves, each singles out an* Amazon, *and all dance, men with women, a lofty strain or two to the hautboys, and cease.*

Tim. You have done our pleasures much grace, fair ladies,
Set a fair fashion on our entertainment,
Which was not half so beautiful and kind;
You have added worth unto 't and lustre,
And entertain'd me with mine own device:
I am to thank you for 't.

First Lady. My lord, you take us even at the best.

Apem. 'Faith, for the worst is filthy, and would not hold taking, I doubt me.

Tim. Ladies, there is an idle banquet attends you:

this time. First brought into England from Italy, in Henry VIII.'s reign, they had received a sudden accession of outward splendour and intrinsic worth in the hands of Ben Jonson, to whose verse Inigo Jones, Alfonso Ferrabosco, John Dowland, and Thomas Gills furnished machinery, music, and dances. Shakespeare has introduced them twice elsewhere, in *Hen. VIII.* and *The Tempest*,—both within a few years of the date of *Timon*.

160. *banquet*, dessert.

Please you to dispose yourselves.
All Ladies. Most thankfully, my lord.
[*Exeunt Cupid and Ladies*
Tim. Flavius.
Flav. My lord?
Tim. The little casket bring me hither.
Flav. Yes, my lord. More jewels yet! [*Aside.*
There is no crossing him in 's humour;
Else I should tell him,—well, i' faith, I should,—
When all 's spent, he 'ld be cross'd then, an he could.
'Tis pity bounty had not eyes behind,
That man might ne'er be wretched for his mind.
[*Exit.*
First Lord. Where be our men?
Serv. Here, my lord, in readiness.
Sec. Lord. Our horses!

Re-enter FLAVIUS, *with the casket.*

Tim. O my friends,
I have one word to say to you: look you, my good lord,
I must entreat you, honour me so much
As to advance this jewel; accept it and wear it,
Kind my lord.
First Lord. I am so far already in your gifts,—
All. So are we all.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My lord, there are certain nobles of the senate
Newly alighted, and come to visit you.
Tim. They are fairly welcome.
Flav. I beseech your honour,
Vouchsafe me a word; it does concern you near.

176. *advance*, add value to.

Tim. Near! why then, another time I'll hear thee:
I prithee, let's be provided to show them entertainment.
Flav. [*Aside*] I scarce know how.

Enter a second Servant.

Sec. Serv. May it please your honour, Lord Lucius,
Out of his free love, hath presented to you
Four milk-white horses, trapp'd in silver.
Tim. I shall accept them fairly: let the presents
Be worthily entertain'd.

Enter a third Servant.

How now! what news?
Third Serv. Please you, my lord, that honourable gentleman, Lord Lucullus, entreats your company to-morrow to hunt with him, and has sent your honour two brace of greyhounds.
Tim. I'll hunt with him; and let them be received,
Not without fair reward.
Flav. [*Aside*] What will this come to?
He commands us to provide, and give great gifts,
And all out of an empty coffer:
Nor will he know his purse, or yield me this,
To show him what a beggar his heart is,
Being of no power to make his wishes good:
His promises fly so beyond his state
That what he speaks is all in debt, he owes
For every word: he is so kind that he now
Pays interest for't; his land's put to their books.
Well, would I were gently put out of office
Before I were forced out!
Happier is he that has no friend to feed

Than such that do e'en enemies exceed.
I bleed inwardly for my lord. [*Exit.*
Tim. You do yourselves
Much wrong, you bate too much of your own merits:
Here, my lord, a trifle of our love.
Sec. Lord. With more than common thanks I will receive it.
Third Lord. O, he's the very soul of bounty!
Tim. And now I remember, my lord, you gave
Good words the other day of a bay courser
I rode on: it is yours, because you liked it.
Sec. Lord. O, I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, in that.
Tim. You may take my word, my lord; I know, no man
Can justly praise but what he does affect:
I weigh my friend's affection with mine own;
I'll tell you true. I'll call to you.
All Lords. O, none so welcome.
Tim. I take all and your several visitations
So kind to heart, 'tis not enough to give;
Methinks, I could deal kingdoms to my friends,
And ne'er be weary. Alcibiades,
Thou art a soldier, therefore seldom rich;
It comes in charity to thee: for all thy living
Is 'mongst the dead, and all the lands thou hast
Lie in a pitch'd field.
Alcib. Ay, defiled land, my lord.
First Lord. We are so virtuously bound—
Tim. And so
Am I to you.
Sec. Lord. So infinitely endear'd—
Tim. All to you. Lights, more lights!
First Lord. The best of happiness,
Honour and fortunes, keep with you, Lord Timon!

Tim. Ready for his friends.

[*Exeunt all but Apemantus and Timon.*

Apem. What a coil 's here!
Serving of becks and jutting-out of bums!
I doubt whether their legs be worth the sums
That are given for 'em. Friendship 's full of dregs:
Methinks, false hearts should never have sound legs.
Thus honest fools lay out their wealth on court'sies.

Tim. Now, Apemantus, if thou wert not sullen,
I would be good to thee.

Apem. No, I 'll nothing: for if I should be bribed too, there would be none left to rail upon thee; and then thou wouldst sin the faster. Thou givest so long, Timon, I fear me thou wilt give away thyself in paper shortly: what need these feasts, pomps and vain-glories?

Tim. Nay, an you begin to rail on society once, I am sworn not to give regard to you. Farewell; and come with better music. [*Exit.*

Apem. So:
Thou wilt not hear me now; thou shalt not then:
I 'll lock thy heaven from thee.
O, that men's ears should be
To counsel deaf, but not to flattery! [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Senator's house.*

Enter Senator, *with papers in his hand.*

Sen. And late, five thousand; to Varro and to Isidore

He owes nine thousand; besides my former sum,
Which makes it five and twenty. Still in motion
Of raging waste? It cannot hold; it will not,
If I want gold, steal but a beggar's dog
And give it Timon, why, the dog coins gold:
If I would sell my horse, and buy twenty more
Better than he, why, give my horse to Timon,
Ask nothing, give it him, it foals me, straight,
And able horses. No porter at his gate,
But rather one that smiles and still invites
All that pass by. It cannot hold; no reason
Can found his state in safety. Caphis, ho!
Caphis, I say!

Enter CAPHIS.

Caph. Here, sir; what is your pleasure?
Sen. Get on your cloak, and haste you to Lord Timon;
Importune him for my moneys; be not ceased
With slight denial; nor then silenced when—
'Commend me to your master'—and the cap
Plays in the right hand, thus: but tell him,
My uses cry to me, I must serve my turn
Out of mine own; his days and times are past
And my reliances on his fracted dates
Have smit my credit: I love and honour him,
But must not break my back to heal his finger:
Immediate are my needs; and my relief
Must not be toss'd and turn'd to me in words,
But find supply immediate. Get you gone:
Put on a most importunate aspéct,
A visage of demand; for, I do fear,
When every feather sticks in his own wing,
Lord Timon will be left a naked gull,
Which flashes now a phœnix. Get you gone.

20. *uses*, necessities. 22. *fracted*, broken.

Caph. I go, sir.
Sen. 'I go, sir!'—Take the bonds along with you,
And have the dates in compt.
Caph. I will, sir.
Sen. Go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. A hall in Timon's house.*

Enter FLAVIUS, *with many bills in his hand.*

Flavius. No care, no stop! so senseless of expense,
That he will neither know how to maintain it,
Nor cease his flow of riot: takes no account
How things go from him; nor resumes no care
Of what is to continue: never mind
Was to be so unwise, to be so kind.
What shall be done? he will not hear, till feel:
I must be round with him, now he comes from hunting.
Fie, fie, fie, fie!

Enter CAPHIS, *and the* Servants *of* ISIDORE *and* VARRO.

Caph. Good even, Varro: what,
You come for money?
Var. Serv. Is't not your business too?
Caph. It is: and yours too, Isidore?
Isid. Serv. It is so.
Caph. Would we were all discharged!
Var. Serv. I fear it.
Caph. Here comes the lord.

35. *in compt*, kept count of, so that the interest might be duly computed.

Enter TIMON, ALCIBIADES, *and* Lords, *etc.*

Tim. So soon as dinner 's done, we 'll forth again,
My Alcibiades. With me? what is your will?
Caph. My lord, here is a note of certain dues.
Tim. Dues! Whence are you?
Caph. Of Athens here, my lord.
Tim. Go to my steward.
Caph. Please it your lordship, he hath put me off
To the succession of new days this month:
My master is awaked by great occasion
To call upon his own, and humbly prays you
That with your other noble parts you 'll suit
In giving him his right.
Tim. Mine honest friend,
I prithee, but repair to me next morning.
Caph. Nay, good my lord,—
Tim. Contain thyself, good friend.
Var. Serv. One Varro's servant, my good lord,—
Isid. Serv. From Isidore;
He humbly prays your speedy payment.
Caph. If you did know, my lord, my master's wants—
Var. Serv. 'Twas due on forfeiture, my lord, six weeks
And past.
Isid. Serv. Your steward puts me off, my lord;
And I am sent expressly to your lordship.
Tim. Give me breath.
I do beseech you, good my lords, keep on;
I 'll wait upon you instantly.
[*Exeunt Alcibiades and Lords.*
[*To Flav.*] Come hither: pray you,
How goes the world, that I am thus encounter'd

20. *To the succession*, etc., to the time of the new moon.
23. *suit*, accord.

With clamorous demands of date-broke bonds,
And the detention of long-since-due debts,
Against my honour?

Flav. Please you, gentlemen,
The time is unagreeable to this business:
Your importunacy cease till after dinner,
That I may make his lordship understand
Wherefore you are not paid.

Tim. Do so, my friends. See them well entertain'd. [*Exit.*

Flav. Pray, draw near. [*Exit.*

Enter APEMANTUS *and* Fool.

Caph. Stay, stay, here comes the fool with Apemantus: let's ha' some sport with 'em.

Var. Serv. Hang him, he'll abuse us.

Isid. Serv. A plague upon him, dog!

Var. Serv. How dost, fool?

Apem. Dost dialogue with thy shadow?

Var. Serv. I speak not to thee.

Apem. No, 'tis to thyself. [*To the Fool*] Come away.

Isid. Serv. There's the fool hangs on your back already.

Apem. No, thou stand'st single, thou'rt not on him yet.

Caph. Where's the fool now?

Apem. He last asked the question. Poor rogues, and usurers' men! bawds between gold and want!

All Serv. What are we, Apemantus?

Apem. Asses.

All Serv. Why?

Apem. That you ask me what you are, and do not know yourselves. Speak to 'em, fool.

Fool. How do you, gentlemen?

All Serv. Gramercies, good fool: how does your mistress?

Fool. She 's e'en setting on water to scald such chickens as you are. Would we could see you at Corinth!

Apem. Good! gramercy.

Enter Page.

Fool. Look you, here comes my mistress' page.

Page. [*To the Fool*] Why, how now, captain! what do you in this wise company? How dost thou, Apemantus?

Apem. Would I had a rod in my mouth, that I might answer thee profitably.

Page. Prithee, Apemantus, read me the superscription of these letters: I know not which is which.

Apem. Canst not read?

Page. No.

Apem. There will little learning die then, that day thou art hanged. This is to Lord Timon; this to Alcibiades. Go; thou wast born a bastard, and thou 't die a bawd.

Page. Thou wast whelped a dog, and thou shalt famish a dog's death. Answer not; I am gone. [*Exit.*

Apem. E'en so thou outrunnest grace. Fool, I will go with you to Lord Timon's.

Fool. Will you leave me there?

Apem. If Timon stay at home. You three serve three usurers?

All Serv. Ay; would they served us!

71. *She's e'en setting on water*, etc., she is preparing to 'pluck' you; alluding to the custom of plunging the newly-killed chicken into boiling water before plucking it. L.

Apem. So would I,—as good a trick as ever hangman served thief.

Fool. Are you three usurers' men?

All Serv. Ay, fool.

Fool. I think no usurer but has a fool to his servant: my mistress is one, and I am her fool. When men come to borrow of your masters, they approach sadly, and go away merry; but they enter my mistress' house merrily, and go away sadly: the reason of this?

Var. Serv. I could render one.

Apem. Do it then, that we may account thee a whore-master and a knave; which notwithstanding, thou shalt be no less esteemed.

Var. Serv. What is a whore-master, fool?

Fool. A fool in good clothes, and something like thee. 'Tis a spirit: sometime 't appears like a lord; sometime like a lawyer; sometime like a philosopher, with two stones moe than 's artificial one: he is very often like a knight; and, generally, in all shapes that man goes up and down in from fourscore to thirteen, this spirit walks in.

Var. Serv. Thou art not altogether a fool.

Fool. Nor thou altogether a wise man: as much foolery as I have, so much wit thou lackest.

Apem. That answer might have become Apemantus.

All Serv. Aside, aside; here comes Lord Timon.

Re-enter TIMON *and* FLAVIUS.

Apem. Come with me, fool, come.

Fool. I do not always follow lover, elder brother and woman; sometime the philosopher.

[*Exeunt Apemantus and Fool.*

Flav. Pray you, walk near: I 'll speak with you anon. [*Exeunt Servants.*

Tim. You make me marvel: wherefore ere this time
Had you not fully laid my state before me,
That I might so have rated my expense,
As I had leave of means?

Flav. You would not hear me,
At many leisures I proposed.

Tim. Go to:
Perchance some single vantages you took,
When my indisposition put you back;
And that unaptness made your minister,
Thus to excuse yourself.

Flav. O my good lord,
At many times I brought in my accounts,
Laid them before you; you would throw them off,
And say, you found them in mine honesty.
When, for some trifling present, you have bid me
Return so much, I have shook my head and wept;
Yea, 'gainst the authority of manners, pray'd you
To hold your hand more close: I did endure
Not seldom, nor no slight checks, when I have
Prompted you in the ebb of your estate
And your great flow of debts. My loved lord,
Though you hear now, too late—yet now 's a time—
The greatest of your having lacks a half
To pay your present debts.

Tim. Let all my land be sold.

Flav. 'Tis all engaged, some forfeited and gone;
And what remains will hardly stop the mouth
Of present dues: the future comes apace:

135. *rated*, calculated.

152. This is the reading of the Folios, but Hanmer's emendation—'Though you hear now, yet now 's too late a time'—seems to accord with the sense of the succeeding lines.

What shall defend the interim? and at length
How goes our reckoning?
Tim. To Lacedæmon did my land extend.
Flav. O my good lord, the world is but a word:
Were it all yours to give it in a breath,
How quickly were it gone!
Tim. You tell me true.
Flav. If you suspect my husbandry or falsehood,
Call me before the exactest auditors
And set me on the proof. So the gods bless me,
When all our offices have been oppress'd
With riotous feeders, when our vaults have wept
With drunken spilth of wine, when every room
Hath blazed with lights and bray'd with minstrelsy,
I have retired me to a wasteful cock,
And set mine eyes at flow.
Tim. Prithee, no more.
Flav. Heavens, have I said, the bounty of this lord!
How many prodigal bits have slaves and peasants
This night englutted! Who is not Timon's?
What heart, head, sword, force, means, but is Lord Timon's?
Great Timon, noble, worthy, royal Timon!
Ah, when the means are gone that buy this praise,
The breath is gone whereof this praise is made:
Feast-won, fast-lost; one cloud of winter showers,
These flies are couch'd.
Tim. Come, sermon me no further:
No villanous bounty yet hath pass'd my heart;
Unwisely, not ignobly, have I given.

171. *wasteful cock.* Of the many suggested emendations 'wakeful cock' (Jackson's) seems the best, meaning a cock-loft where Flavius remained sleepless. The text may, however, be understood in the sense that he sat by a running wine-cock, shedding tears as fast as the wine was wasted.

181. *couch'd*, driven to hibernate.

Why dost thou weep? Canst thou the conscience lack,
To think I shall lack friends? Secure thy heart;
If I would broach the vessels of my love,
And try the argument of hearts by borrowing,
Men and men's fortunes could I frankly use
As I can bid thee speak.

Flav. Assurance bless your thoughts!

Tim. And, in some sort, these wants of mine are crown'd,
That I account them blessings; for by these
Shall I try friends: you shall perceive how you
Mistake my fortunes; I am wealthy in my friends.
Within there! Flaminius! Servilius!

Enter FLAMINIUS, SERVILIUS, *and other* Servants.

Servants. My lord? my lord?

Tim. I will dispatch you severally; you to Lord Lucius: to Lord Lucullus you: I hunted with his honour to-day: you, to Sempronius: commend me to their loves, and, I am proud, say, that my occasions have found time to use 'em toward a supply of money: let the request be fifty talents.

Flam. As you have said, my lord.

Flav. [*Aside*] Lord Lucius and Lucullus? hum!

Tim. Go you, sir, to the senators—
Of whom, even to the state's best health, I have
Deserved this hearing—bid 'em send o' the instant
A thousand talents to me.

Flav. I have been bold—
For that I knew it the most general way—
To them to use your signet and your name;
But they do shake their heads, and I am here
No richer in return.

Tim. Is 't true? can 't be?
Flav. They answer, in a joint and corporate voice,
That now they are at fall, want treasure, cannot
Do what they would; are sorry—you are honourable,—
But yet they could have wish'd—they know not—
Something hath been amiss—a noble nature
May catch a wrench—would all were well—'tis pity;—
And so, intending other serious matters,
After distasteful looks and these hard fractions,
With certain half-caps and cold-moving nods
They froze me into silence.
Tim. You gods, reward them!
Prithee, man, look cheerly. These old fellows
Have their ingratitude in them hereditary:
Their blood is caked, 'tis cold, it seldom flows;
'Tis lack of kindly warmth they are not kind;
And nature, as it grows again toward earth,
Is fashion'd for the journey, dull and heavy.
[*To a Serv.*] Go to Ventidius. [*To Flav.*] Prithee, be not sad,
Thou art true and honest; ingeniously I speak,
No blame belongs to thee. [*To Ser.*] Ventidius lately
Buried his father, by whose death he 's stepp'd
Into a great estate: when he was poor,
Imprison'd and in scarcity of friends,
I clear'd him with five talents: greet him from me;
Bid him suppose some good necessity
Touches his friend, which craves to be remember'd
With those five talents [*Exit Ser.*]. [*To Flav.*] That had, give 't these fellows
To whom 'tis instant due. Ne'er speak, or think,

214. *at fall*, at their fortune's decline.

That Timon's fortunes 'mong his friends can sink.
Flav. I would I could not think it: that thought
is bounty's foe;
Being free itself, it thinks all others so. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A room in Lucullus' house.*

FLAMINIUS *waiting.* *Enter a* Servant *to him.*

Serv. I have told my lord of you; he is coming down to you.
Flam. I thank you, sir.

Enter LUCULLUS.

Serv. Here's my lord.
Lucul. [*Aside*] One of Lord Timon's men? a gift, I warrant. Why, this hits right; I dreamt of a silver basin and ewer to-night. Flaminius, honest Flaminius; you are very respectively welcome, sir. Fill me some wine. [*Exit Servant.*] And how does that honourable, complete, free-hearted gentleman of Athens, thy very bountiful good lord and master?
Flam. His health is well, sir.
Lucul. I am right glad that his health is well, sir: and what hast thou there under thy cloak, pretty Flaminius?
Flam. 'Faith, nothing but an empty box, sir; which, in my lord's behalf, I come to entreat your honour to supply; who, having great and instant

7. *very respectively*, as befits a most respected guest.

occasion to use fifty talents, hath sent to your lordship to furnish him, nothing doubting your present assistance therein.

Lucul. La, la, la, la! 'nothing doubting,' says he? Alas, good lord! a noble gentleman 'tis, if he would not keep so good a house. Many a time and often I ha' dined with him, and told him on 't; and come again to supper to him, of purpose to have him spend less, and yet he would embrace no counsel, take no warning by my coming. Every man has his fault, and honesty is his: I ha' told him on 't, but I could ne'er get him from 't.

Re-enter Servant, *with wine.*

Serv. Please your lordship, here is the wine.

Lucul. Flaminius, I have noted thee always wise. Here 's to thee.

Flam. Your lordship speaks your pleasure.

Lucul. I have observed thee always for a towardly prompt spirit—give thee thy due—and one that knows what belongs to reason; and canst use the time well, if the time use thee well: good parts in thee. [*To Serv.*] Get you gone, sirrah [*Exit Serv.*]. Draw nearer, honest Flaminius. Thy lord 's a bountiful gentleman: but thou art wise; and thou knowest well enough, although thou comest to me, that this is no time to lend money, especially upon bare friendship, without security. Here 's three solidares for thee: good boy, wink at me, and say thou sawest me not. Fare thee well.

19. *fifty talents.* The Greek gold talent was worth about £240. But the writer clearly intended coin of much smaller value (prob. the English pound. L.).

46. *solidares*, small coins.

Flam. Is 't possible the world should so much differ,
And we alive that lived? Fly, damned baseness,
To him that worships thee!
[*Throwing the money back.*
Lucul. Ha! now I see thou art a fool, and fit for thy master. [*Exit.*
Flam. May these add to the number that may scald thee!
Let molten coin be thy damnation,
Thou disease of a friend, and not himself!
Has friendship such a faint and milky heart,
It turns in less than two nights? O you gods,
I feel my master's passion! this slave,
Unto his honour, has my lord's meat in him:
Why should it thrive and turn to nutriment,
When he is turn'd to poison?
O, may diseases only work upon 't!
And, when he 's sick to death, let not that part of nature
Which my lord paid for, be of any power
To expel sickness, but prolong his hour! [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A public place.*

Enter LUCIUS, *with three* Strangers.

Luc. Who, the Lord Timon? he is my very good friend, and an honourable gentleman.
First Stran. We know him for no less, though we are but strangers to him. But I can tell you one thing, my lord, and which I hear from

59. *this slave, unto his honour;* so Steevens for Ff 'slave unto his honour.' Lucullus, it is insinuated, is a slave who had been honoured by admission to Timon's feasts.

common rumours: now Lord Timon's happy hours are done and past, and his estate shrinks from him.

Luc. Fie, no, do not believe it; he cannot want for money.

Sec. Stran. But believe you this, my lord, that, not long ago, one of his men was with the Lord Lucullus to borrow so many talents; nay, urged extremely for 't and showed what necessity belonged to 't, and yet was denied.

Luc. How!

Sec. Stran. I tell you, denied, my lord.

Luc. What a strange case was that! now, before the gods, I am ashamed on 't. Denied that honourable man! there was very little honour showed in 't. For my own part, I must needs confess, I have received some small kindnesses from him, as money, plate, jewels and such-like trifles, nothing comparing to his; yet, had he mistook him and sent to me, I should ne'er have denied his occasion so many talents.

Enter SERVILIUS.

Ser. See, by good hap, yonder 's my lord; I have sweat to see his honour. My honoured lord,— [*To Lucius.*

Luc. Servilius! you are kindly met, sir. Fare thee well: commend me to thy honourable virtuous lord, my very exquisite friend.

Ser. May it please your honour, my lord hath sent—

Luc. Ha! what has he sent? I am so much endeared to that lord; he 's ever sending: how shall I thank him, thinkest thou? And what has he sent now?

Ser. Has only sent his present occasion now,

my lord; requesting your lordship to supply his instant use with so many talents.

Luc. I know his lordship is but merry with me;
He cannot want fifty five hundred talents.

Ser. But in the mean time he wants less, my lord.
If his occasion were not virtuous,
I should not urge it half so faithfully.

Luc. Dost thou speak seriously, Servilius?

Ser. Upon my soul, 'tis true, sir.

Luc. What a wicked beast was I to disfurnish myself against such a good time, when I might ha' shown myself honourable! how unluckily it happened, that I should purchase the day before for a little part, and undo a great deal of honour! Servilius, now, before the gods, I am not able to do,—the more beast, I say:—I was sending to use Lord Timon myself, these gentlemen can witness; but I would not, for the wealth of Athens, I had done't now. Commend me bountifully to his good lordship; and I hope his honour will conceive the fairest of me, because I have no power to be kind: and tell him this from me, I count it one of my greatest afflictions, say, that I cannot pleasure such an honourable gentleman. Good Servilius, will you befriend me so far, as to use mine own words to him?

41. *so many.* This has been suspected, and Theobald altered to 'fifty,' to correspond with Timon's previous demand. Perhaps the servant indicates the sum on paper, the description 'so many' thus corresponding verbally with the Stranger's allusion in l. 13. Lucius replies with an extravagant distortion of the sum demanded.

53. *for a little part*, i.e. of honour. My purchase, which brought me but a modicum of honour, also deprived me of the opportunity of an honourable act.

Ser. Yes, sir, I shall.

Luc. I'll look you out a good turn, Servilius.
[*Exit Servilius.*

True, as you said, Timon is shrunk indeed;
And he that's once denied will hardly speed.
[*Exit.*

First Stran. Do you observe this, Hostilius?

Sec. Stran. Ay, too well.

First Stran. Why, this is the world's soul; and just of the same piece
Is every flatterer's spirit. Who can call him
His friend that dips in the same dish? for, in
My knowing, Timon has been this lord's father,
And kept his credit with his purse,
Supported his estate; nay, Timon's money
Has paid his men their wages: he ne'er drinks,
But Timon's silver treads upon his lip;
And yet—O, see the monstrousness of man
When he looks out in an ungrateful shape!—
He does deny him, in respect of his,
What charitable men afford to beggars.

Third Stran. Religion groans at it.

First Stran. For mine own part,
I never tasted Timon in my life,
Nor came any of his bounties over me,
To mark me for his friend; yet, I protest,
For his right noble mind, illustrious virtue
And honourable carriage,
Had his necessity made use of me,
I would have put my wealth into donation,
And the best half should have return'd to him,
So much I love his heart: but, I perceive,
Men must learn now with pity to dispense;
For policy sits above conscience. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *A room in Sempronius' house.*

Enter Sempronius, *and a* Servant *of* Timon's.

Sem. Must he needs trouble me in 't,—hum!
—'bove all others?
He might have tried Lord Lucius or Lucullus;
And now Ventidius is wealthy too,
Whom he redeem'd from prison: all these
Owe their estates unto him.
Serv. My lord,
They have all been touch'd and found base metal, for
They have all denied him.
Sem. How! have they denied him?
Has Ventidius and Lucullus denied him?
And does he send to me? Three? hum!
It shows but little love or judgement in him:
Must I be his last refuge? His friends, like physicians,
Thrive, give him over: must I take the cure upon me?
'Has much disgraced me in 't; I 'm angry at him,
That might have known my place: I see no sense for 't,
But his occasions might have woo'd me first;
For, in my conscience, I was the first man
That e'er received gift from him:
And does he think so backwardly of me now,
That I 'll requite it last? No:
So it may prove an argument of laughter
To the rest, and 'mongst lords I be thought a fool.

6. *touch'd*, tried with the touchstone.
12. *Thrive*, the reading of F_1. $Ff_{2,3}$ 'that thrived. Did Shakespeare write 'Have given'?

I 'ld rather than the worth of thrice the sum,
Had sent to me first, but for my mind's sake ;
I 'd such a courage to do him good. But now return,
And with their faint reply this answer join ;
Who bates mine honour shall not know my coin.
[*Exit.*

Serv. Excellent ! Your lordship 's a goodly villain. The devil knew not what he did when he made man politic ; he crossed himself by 't : and I cannot think but, in the end, the villanies of man will set him clear. How fairly this lord strives to appear foul ! takes virtuous copies to be wicked ; like those that under hot ardent zeal would set whole realms on fire :
Of such a nature is his politic love.
This was my lord's best hope ; now all are fled,
Save only the gods : now his friends are dead,
Doors, that were ne'er acquainted with their wards
Many a bounteous year, must be employ'd
Now to guard sure their master.
And this is all a liberal course allows ;
Who cannot keep his wealth must keep his house.
[*Exit.*

Scene IV. *The same. A hall in Timon's house.*

Enter two Servants *of* Varro, *and the* Servant *of* Lucius, *meeting* Titus, Hortensius, *and other* Servants *of* Timon's *creditors, waiting his coming out.*

First Var. Serv. Well met ; good morrow, Titus and Hortensius.

Tit. The like to you, kind Varro.

29. *crossed himself,* defeated his own purpose.

Hor. Lucius!
What, do we meet together?
Luc. Serv. Ay, and I think
One business does command us all; for mine
Is money.
Tit. So is theirs and ours.

Enter PHILOTUS.

Luc. Serv. And Sir Philotus too!
Phi. Good day at once.
Luc. Serv. Welcome, good brother.
What do you think the hour?
Phi. Labouring for nine.
Luc. Serv. So much?
Phi. Is not my lord seen yet?
Luc. Serv. Not yet.
Phi. I wonder on't; he was wont to shine at seven.
Luc. Serv. Ay, but the days are wax'd shorter with him:
You must consider that a prodigal course
Is like the sun's; but not, like his, recoverable.
I fear 'tis deepest winter in Lord Timon's purse;
That is, one may reach deep enough, and yet
Find little.
Phi. I am of your fear for that.
Tit. I'll show you how to observe a strange event.
Your lord sends now for money.
Hor. Most true, he does.
Tit. And he wears jewels now of Timon's gift,
For which I wait for money.
Hor. It is against my heart.
Luc. Serv. Mark, how strange it shows,
Timon in this should pay more than he owes:
And e'en as if your lord should wear rich jewels,

And send for money for 'em.

Hor. I 'm weary of this charge, the gods can witness:
I know my lord hath spent of Timon's wealth,
And now ingratitude makes it worse than stealth.

First Var. Serv. Yes, mine 's three thousand crowns: what 's yours?

Luc. Serv. Five thousand mine.

First Var. Serv. 'Tis much deep: and it should seem by the sum,
Your master's confidence was above mine;
Else, surely, his had equall'd.

Enter FLAMINIUS.

Tit. One of Lord Timon's men.

Luc. Serv. Flaminius! Sir, a word: pray, is my lord ready to come forth?

Flam. No, indeed, he is not.

Tit. We attend his lordship: pray, signify so much.

Flam. I need not tell him that; he knows you are too diligent. [*Exit.*

Enter FLAVIUS *in a cloak, muffled.*

Luc. Serv. Ha! is not that his steward muffled so?
He goes away in a cloud: call him, call him.

Tit. Do you hear, sir?

Sec. Var. Serv. By your leave, sir,—

Flav. What do ye ask of me, my friend?

Tit. We wait for certain money here, sir.

Flav. Ay,
If money were as certain as your waiting,
'Twere sure enough.
Why then preferr'd you not your sums and bills,
When your false masters eat of my lord's meat?
Then they could smile and fawn upon his debts

And take down the interest into their gluttonous maws.
You do yourselves but wrong to stir me up;
Let me pass quietly:
Believe 't, my lord and I have made an end;
I have no more to reckon, he to spend.

Luc. Serv. Ay, but this answer will not serve.

Flav. If 'twill not serve, 'tis not so base as you;
For you serve knaves. [*Exit.*

First Var. Serv. How! what does his cashiered worship mutter?

Sec. Var. Serv. No matter what; he 's poor, and that 's revenge enough. Who can speak broader than he that has no house to put his head in? such may rail against great buildings.

Enter SERVILIUS.

Tit. O, here 's Servilius; now we shall know some answer.

Ser. If I might beseech you, gentlemen, to repair some other hour, I should derive much from 't; for, take 't of my soul, my lord leans wondrously to discontent: his comfortable temper has forsook him; he 's much out of health, and keeps his chamber.

Luc. Serv. Many do keep their chambers are not sick:
And, if it be so far beyond his health,
Methinks he should the sooner pay his debts,
And make a clear way to the gods.

70 f. 'Here, as in Lear and Constance, the poet takes care to mark the concurrence of physical with moral causes of insanity. Mere bodily disease is no subject for dramatic representation; and the fact of its existence is lightly enough indicated; but it is indicated, and that is sufficient to preserve the exact natural verisimilitude of the diseased mind's history' (Dr. Bucknill, *The Mad Folk of Shakespeare*, p. 247).

Ser. Good gods!
Tit. We cannot take this for answer, sir.
Flam. [*Within*] Servilius, help! My lord! my lord!

Enter TIMON, *in a rage;* FLAMINIUS *following.*

Tim. What, are my doors opposed against my passage?
Have I been ever free, and must my house
Be my retentive enemy, my gaol?
The place which I have feasted, does it now,
Like all mankind, show me an iron heart?
Luc. Serv. Put in now, Titus.
Tit. My lord, here is my bill.
Luc. Serv. Here's mine.
Hor. And mine, my lord.
Both Var. Serv. And ours, my lord.
Phi. All our bills.
Tim. Knock me down with 'em: cleave me to the girdle.
Luc. Serv. Alas, my lord,—
Tim. Cut my heart in sums
Tit. Mine, fifty talents.
Tim. Tell out my blood.
Luc. Serv. Five thousand crowns, my lord.
Tim. Five thousand drops pays that. What yours?—and yours?
First Var. Serv. My lord,—
Sec. Var. Serv. My lord,—
Tim. Tear me, take me, and the gods fall upon you! [*Exit.*
Hor. 'Faith, I perceive our masters may throw their caps at their money: these debts may well be called desperate ones, for a madman owes 'em.
[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter TIMON *and* FLAVIUS.

Tim. They have e'en put my breath from me, the slaves.
Creditors? devils!
Flav. My dear lord,—
Tim. What if it should be so?
Flav. My lord,—
Tim. I'll have it so. My steward!
Flav. Here, my lord.
Tim. So fitly? Go, bid all my friends again,
Lucius, Lucullus, and Sempronius: all:
I'll once more feast the rascals.
Flav. O my lord,
You only speak from your distracted soul;
There is not so much left, to furnish out
A moderate table.
Tim. Be't not in thy care; go,
I charge thee, invite them all: let in the tide
Of knaves once more; my cook and I'll provide.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *The same. The senate-house.*

The Senate sitting.

First Sen. My lord, you have my voice to it; the fault's
Bloody; 'tis necessary he should die:
Nothing emboldens sin so much as mercy.
Sec. Sen. Most true; the law shall bruise him.

Enter ALCIBIADES, *with* Attendants.

Alcib. Honour, health, and compassion to the senate!

112. *Sempronius: all.* This is the reading of $Ff_{3,4}$. F_1 has 'Sempronius Vllorxa: All.' 1. *voice*, vote.

First Sen. Now, captain?

Alcib. I am an humble suitor to your virtues;
For pity is the virtue of the law,
And none but tyrants use it cruelly.
It pleases time and fortune to lie heavy
Upon a friend of mine, who, in hot blood,
Hath stepp'd into the law, which is past depth
To those that, without heed, do plunge into 't.
He is a man, setting his fate aside,
Of comely virtues:
Nor did he soil the fact with cowardice—
An honour in him which buys out his fault—
But with a noble fury and fair spirit,
Seeing his reputation touch'd to death,
He did oppose his foe:
And with such sober and unnoted passion
He did behave his anger, ere 'twas spent,
As if he had but proved an argument.

First Sen. You undergo too strict a paradox,
Striving to make an ugly deed look fair:
Your words have took such pains as if they labour'd
To bring manslaughter into form and set quarrelling
Upon the head of valour; which indeed
Is valour misbegot and came into the world
When sects and factions were newly born:
He 's truly valiant that can wisely suffer
The worst that man can breathe, and make his wrongs
His outsides, to wear them like his raiment, carelessly,
And ne'er prefer his injuries to his heart,
To bring it into danger.
If wrongs be evils and enforce us kill,
What folly 'tis to hazard life for ill!

22. *behave*, control. 34. *prefer*, show.

Alcib. My lord,—
First Sen. You cannot make gross sins
look clear:
To revenge is no valour, but to bear.
Alcib. My lords, then, under favour, pardon me,
If I speak like a captain.
Why do fond men expose themselves to battle,
And not endure all threats? sleep upon 't,
And let the foes quietly cut their throats,
Without repugnancy? If there be
Such valour in the bearing, what make we
Abroad? why then, women are more valiant
That stay at home, if bearing carry it,
And the ass more captain than the lion, the felon
Loaden with irons wiser than the judge,
If wisdom be in suffering. O my lords,
As you are great, be pitifully good:
Who cannot condemn rashness in cold blood?
To kill, I grant, is sin's extremest gust;
But, in defence, by mercy, 'tis most just.
To be in anger is impiety;
But who is man that is not angry?
Weigh but the crime with this.
Sec. Sen. You breathe in vain.
Alcib. In vain! his service done
At Lacedæmon and Byzantium
Were a sufficient briber for his life.
First Sen. What 's that?
Alcib. Why, I say, my lords, 'has done fair service,
And slain in fight many of your enemies:
How full of valour did he bear himself
In the last conflict, and made plenteous wounds!

42. *fond*, infatuated.
54. *sin's extremest gust*, the most violent and outrageous of sins.

Sec. Sen. He has made too much plenty with 'em;
He 's a sworn rioter: he has a sin that often
Drowns him, and takes his valour prisoner:
If there were no foes, that were enough
To overcome him: in that beastly fury
He has been known to commit outrages,
And cherish factions: 'tis inferr'd to us,
His days are foul and his drink dangerous.
First Sen. He dies.
Alcib. Hard fate! he might have died in war.
My lords, if not for any parts in him—
Though his right arm might purchase his own time
And be in debt to none—yet, more to move you,
Take my deserts to his, and join 'em both:
And, for I know your reverend ages love
Security, I 'll pawn my victories, all
My honours to you, upon his good returns.
If by this crime he owes the law his life,
Why, let the war receive 't in valiant gore;
For law is strict, and war is nothing more.
First Sen. We are for law: he dies; urge it no more,
On height of our displeasure: friend or brother,
He forfeits his own blood that spills another.
Alcib. Must it be so? it must not be. My lords,
I do beseech you, know me.
Sec. Sen. How!
Alcib. Call me to your remembrances.
Third Sen. What!
Alcib. I cannot think but your age has forgot me;
It could not else be I should prove so base,
To sue and be denied such common grace:
My wounds ache at you.
First Sen. Do you dare our anger?

76. *parts*, merits.

'Tis in few words, but spacious in effect;
We banish thee for ever.
Alcib. Banish me!
Banish your dotage; banish usury,
That makes the senate ugly.
First Sen. If, after two days' shine, Athens contain thee,
Attend our weightier judgement. And, not to swell our spirit,
He shall be executed presently.
[*Exeunt Senators.*
Alcib. Now the gods keep you old enough; that you may live
Only in bone, that none may look on you!
I 'm worse than mad: I have kept back their foes,
While they have told their money and let out
Their coin upon large interest, I myself
Rich only in large hurts. All those for this?
Is this the balsam that the usuring senate
Pours into captains' wounds? Banishment!
It comes not ill; I hate not to be banish'd;
It is a cause worthy my spleen and fury,
That I may strike at Athens. I 'll cheer up
My discontented troops, and lay for hearts.
'Tis honour with most lands to be at odds;
Soldiers should brook as little wrongs as gods.
[*Exit.*

SCENE VI. *The same. A banqueting-room in Timon's house.*

Music. Tables set out: Servants *attending.* *Enter divers* Lords, Senators *and others, at several doors.*

First Lord. The good time of day to you, sir

115. *lay for hearts,* try to win partisans.

Sec. Lord. I also wish it to you. I think this honourable lord did but try us this other day.

First Lord. Upon that were my thoughts tiring, when we encountered: I hope it is not so low with him as he made it seem in the trial of his several friends.

Sec. Lord. It should not be, by the persuasion of his new feasting.

First Lord. I should think so: he hath sent me an earnest inviting, which many my near occasions did urge me to put off; but he hath conjured me beyond them, and I must needs appear.

Sec. Lord. In like manner was I in debt to my importunate business, but he would not hear my excuse. I am sorry, when he sent to borrow of me, that my provision was out.

First Lord. I am sick of that grief too, as I understand how all things go.

Sec. Lord. Every man here 's so. What would he have borrowed of you?

First Lord. A thousand pieces.

Sec. Lord. A thousand pieces!

First Lord. What of you?

Sec. Lord. He sent to me, sir,—Here he comes.

Enter TIMON *and* Attendants.

Tim. With all my heart, gentlemen both; and how fare you?

First Lord. Ever at the best, hearing well of your lordship.

Sec. Lord. The swallow follows not summer more willing than we your lordship.

Tim. [*Aside*] Nor more willingly leaves winter;

5. *tiring*, tearing like a bird of prey; my thoughts were eagerly fastened on it.

such summer-birds are men. Gentlemen, our dinner will not recompense this long stay: feast your ears with the music awhile, if they will fare so harshly o' the trumpet's sound; we shall to 't presently.

First Lord. I hope it remains not unkindly with your lordship that I returned you an empty messenger.

Tim. O, sir, let it not trouble you.

Sec. Lord. My noble lord,—

Tim. Ah, my good friend, what cheer?

Sec. Lord. My most honourable lord, I am e'en sick of shame, that, when your lordship this other day sent to me, I was so unfortunate a beggar.

Tim. Think not on 't, sir.

Sec. Lord. If you had sent but two hours before,—

Tim. Let it not cumber your better remembrance. [*The banquet brought in.*] Come, bring in all together.

Sec. Lord. All covered dishes!

First Lord. Royal cheer, I warrant you.

Third Lord. Doubt not that, if money and the season can yield it.

First Lord. How do you? What 's the news?

Third Lord. Alcibiades is banished: hear you of it?

First and Sec. Lord. Alcibiades banished!

Third Lord. 'Tis so, be sure of it.

First Lord. How! how!

Sec. Lord. I pray you, upon what?

Tim. My worthy friends, will you draw near?

Third Lord. I 'll tell you more anon. Here 's a noble feast toward.

Sec. Lord. This is the old man still.

Third Lord. Will't hold? will't hold?
Sec. Lord. It does: but time will—and so—
Third Lord. I do conceive.
Tim. Each man to his stool, with that spur as he would to the lip of his mistress: your diet shall be in all places alike. Make not a city feast of it, to let the meat cool ere we can agree upon the first place: sit, sit. The gods require our thanks.

You great benefactors, sprinkle our society with thankfulness. For your own gifts, make yourselves praised: but reserve still to give, lest your deities be despised. Lend to each man enough, that one need not lend to another; for, were your godheads to borrow of men, men would forsake the gods. Make the meat be beloved more than the man that gives it. Let no assembly of twenty be without a score of villains: if there sit twelve women at the table, let a dozen of them be—as they are. The rest of your fees, O gods—the senators of Athens, together with the common lag of people—what is amiss in them, you gods, make suitable for destruction. For these my present friends, as they are to me nothing, so in nothing bless them, and to nothing are they welcome.

Uncover, dogs, and lap.

[*The dishes are uncovered and seen to be full of warm water.*

Some speak. What does his lordship mean?
Some other. I know not.
Tim. May you a better feast never behold,
You knot of mouth-friends! smoke and luke-warm water
Is your perfection. This is Timon's last;
Who, stuck and spangled with your flatteries,

Washes it off, and sprinkles in your faces
Your reeking villany.
[*Throwing the water in their faces.*
Live loathed and long,
Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites,
Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears,
You fools of fortune, trencher-friends, time's flies,
Cap and knee slaves, vapours, and minute-jacks!
Of man and beast the infinite malady
Crust you quite o'er! What, dost thou go?
Soft! take thy physic first—thou too—and thou;—
Stay, I will lend thee money, borrow none.
[*Throws the dishes at them, and drives them out.*
What, all in motion? Henceforth be no feast,
Whereat a villain 's not a welcome guest.
Burn, house! sink, Athens! henceforth hated be
Of Timon man and all humanity! [*Exit.*

Re-enter the Lords, Senators, *etc.*

First Lord. How now, my lords!

Sec. Lord. Know you the quality of Lord Timon's fury?

Third Lord. Push! did you see my cap?

Fourth Lord. I have lost my gown.

First Lord. He 's but a mad lord, and nought but humour sways him. He gave me a jewel th' other day, and now he has beat it out of my hat: did you see my jewel?

Third Lord. Did you see my cap?

Sec. Lord. Here 'tis.

Fourth Lord. Here lies my gown.

107. *minute-jacks*, time-servers, watchful of occasion as the 'Jack o' the clock' (*Richard II.* v. 5. 60) which sounded the quarters or even the minutes in old clocks.

119. *Push!* Pish!

122. *humour*, caprice.

First Lord. Let 's make no stay.
Sec. Lord. Lord Timon 's mad.
Third Lord. I feel 't upon my bones.
Fourth Lord. One day he gives us diamonds, next day stones. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Without the walls of Athens.*

Enter TIMON.

Tim. Let me look back upon thee. O thou wall,
That girdlest in those wolves, dive in the earth,
And fence not Athens! Matrons, turn incontinent!
Obedience fail in children! slaves and fools,
Pluck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench,
And minister in their steads! to general filths
Convert o' the instant, green virginity,
Do 't in your parents' eyes! bankrupts, hold fast;
Rather than render back, out with your knives,
And cut your trusters' throats! bound servants, steal!
Large-handed robbers your grave masters are,
And pill by law. Maid, to thy master's bed;
Thy mistress is o' the brothel! Son of sixteen,
Pluck the lined crutch from thy old limping sire,
With it beat out his brains! Piety, and fear,
Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,
Domestic awe, night-rest, and neighbourhood,
Instruction, manners, mysteries, and trades,
Degrees, observances, customs, and laws,

12. *pill*, pillage, plunder. 14. *lined*, stuffed.

Decline to your confounding contraries,
And let confusion live! Plagues, incident to men,
Your potent and infectious fevers heap
On Athens, ripe for stroke! Thou cold sciatica,
Cripple our senators, that their limbs may halt
As lamely as their manners! Lust and liberty
Creep in the minds and marrows of our youth,
That 'gainst the stream of virtue they may strive,
And drown themselves in riot! Itches, blains,
Sow all the Athenian bosoms; and their crop
Be general leprosy! Breath infect breath,
That their society, as their friendship, may
Be merely poison! Nothing I 'll bear from thee,
But nakedness, thou detestable town!
Take thou that too, with multiplying bans!
Timon will to the woods, where he shall find
The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.
The gods confound—hear me, you good gods all—
The Athenians both within and out that wall!
And grant, as Timon grows, his hate may grow
To the whole race of mankind, high and low!
Amen. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *Athens. A room in Timon's house.*

Enter Flavius, *with two or three* Servants.

First Serv. Hear you, master steward, where 's our master?
Are we undone? cast off? nothing remaining?
Flav. Alack, my fellows, what should I say to you?
Let me be recorded by the righteous gods,
I am as poor as you.
First Serv. Such a house broke!

So noble a master fall'n! All gone! and not
One friend to take his fortune by the arm,
And go along with him!
Sec. Serv. As we do turn our backs
From our companion thrown into his grave,
So his familiars to his buried fortunes
Slink all away, leave their false vows with him,
Like empty purses pick'd; and his poor self,
A dedicated beggar to the air,
With his disease of all-shunn'd poverty,
Walks, like contempt, alone. More of our fellows.

Enter other Servants.

Flav. All broken implements of a ruin'd house.
Third Serv. Yet do our hearts wear Timon's livery;
That see I by our faces; we are fellows still,
Serving alike in sorrow: leak'd is our bark,
And we, poor mates, stand on the dying deck,
Hearing the surges threat: we must all part
Into this sea of air.
Flav. Good fellows all,
The latest of my wealth I 'll share amongst you.
Wherever we shall meet, for Timon's sake,
Let 's yet be fellows; let 's shake our heads, and say,
As 'twere a knell unto our master's fortunes,
'We have seen better days.' Let each take some.
Nay, put out all your hands. Not one word more:
Thus part we rich in sorrow, parting poor.
[*Servants embrace, and part several ways.*
O, the fierce wretchedness that glory brings us!
Who would not wish to be from wealth exempt,
Since riches point to misery and contempt?
Who 'd be so mock'd with glory? or to live
But in a dream of friendship?

To have his pomp and all what state compounds
But only painted, like his varnish'd friends?
Poor honest lord, brought low by his own heart,
Undone by goodness! Strange, unusual blood,
When man's worst sin is, he does too much good!
Who, then, dares to be half so kind again?
For bounty, that makes gods, does still mar men.
My dearest lord, bless'd, to be most accursed,
Rich, only to be wretched, thy great fortunes
Are made thy chief afflictions. Alas, kind lord!
He 's flung in rage from this ingrateful seat
Of monstrous friends, nor has he with him to
Supply his life, or that which can command it.
I 'll follow and inquire him out:
I 'll ever serve his mind with my best will;
Whilst I have gold, I 'll be his steward still.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Woods and cave, near the sea-shore.*

Enter TIMON, *from the cave.*

Tim. O blessed breeding sun, draw from the earth
Rotten humidity; below thy sister's orb
Infect the air! Twinn'd brothers of one womb,
Whose procreation, residence, and birth,
Scarce is dividant, touch them with several fortunes;
The greater scorns the lesser: not nature,
To whom all sores lay siege, can bear great fortune,
But by contempt of nature.

35. *what state compounds*, that which composes state. 'State comprehends' has been suggested, rhyming with 'friends'; but the rhymes are too irregular to justify any change.

38. *blood*, disposition, temper.

Raise me this beggar, and deny't that lord,
The senator shall bear contempt hereditary,
The beggar native honour.
It is the pasture lards the rother's sides,
The want that makes him lean. Who dares, who dares,
In purity of manhood stand upright,
And say 'This man's a flatterer'? if one be,
So are they all; for every grise of fortune
Is smooth'd by that below: the learned pate
Ducks to the golden fool: all is oblique;
There's nothing level in our cursed natures,
But direct villany. Therefore, be abhorr'd
All feasts, societies, and throngs of men!
His semblable, yea, himself, Timon disdains:
Destruction fang mankind! Earth, yield me roots! [*Digging.*
Who seeks for better of thee, sauce his palate
With thy most operant poison! What is here?
Gold? yellow, glittering, precious gold? No, gods,
I am no idle votarist: roots, you clear heavens!
Thus much of this will make black white, foul fair,
Wrong right, base noble, old young, coward valiant.
Ha, you gods! why this? what this, you gods? Why, this
Will lug your priests and servants from your sides,
Pluck stout men's pillows from below their heads:
This yellow slave
Will knit and break religions; bless the accursed,
Make the hoar leprosy adored; place thieves
And give them title, knee and approbation
With senators on the bench: this is it

9. *deny't*, i.e. deny elevation to.
12. *rother's*, ox's. So Singer for 'brothers.'
16. *grise*, step.
19. *level*, straightforward, sincere.
23. *fang*, seize.

That makes the wapper'd widow wed again;
She, whom the spital-house and ulcerous sores
Would cast the gorge at, this embalms and spices
To the April day again. Come, damned earth,
Thou common whore of mankind, that put'st odds
Among the rout of nations, I will make thee
Do thy right nature. [*March afar off.*] Ha! a drum? Thou 'rt quick,
But yet I 'll bury thee: thou 'lt go, strong thief,
When gouty keepers of thee cannot stand.
Nay, stay thou out for earnest.

[*Keeping some gold.*

Enter ALCIBIADES, *with drum and fife, in warlike manner*; PHRYNIA *and* TIMANDRA.

Alcib. What art thou there? speak.

Tim. A beast, as thou art. The canker gnaw thy heart,
For showing me again the eyes of man!

Alcib. What is thy name? Is man so hateful to thee,
That art thyself a man?

Tim. I am Misanthropos, and hate mankind.
For thy part, I do wish thou wert a dog,
That I might love thee something.

Alcib. I know thee well;
But in thy fortunes am unlearn'd and strange.

Tim. I know thee too; and more than that I know thee,
I not desire to know. Follow thy drum;
With man's blood paint the ground, gules, gules:
Religious canons, civil laws are cruel;
Then what should war be? This fell whore of thine

38. *wapper'd*, worn-out. Misprinted 'wappen'd' in F; 'unwapper'd' occurs in *Two N. Kins.* v. 4. 10, and elsewhere. L.

Hath in her more destruction than thy sword,
For all her cherubin look.

Phry. Thy lips rot off!

Tim. I will not kiss thee; then the rot returns
To thine own lips again.

Alcib. How came the noble Timon to this change?

Tim. As the moon does, by wanting light to give:
But then renew I could not, like the moon;
There were no suns to borrow of.

Alcib. Noble Timon,
What friendship may I do thee?

Tim. None, but to
Maintain my opinion.

Alcib. What is it, Timon?

Tim. Promise me friendship, but perform none: if thou wilt not promise, the gods plague thee, for thou art a man: if thou dost perform, confound thee, for thou art a man!

Alcib. I have heard in some sort of thy miseries.

Tim. Thou saw'st them, when I had prosperity.

Alcib. I see them now; then was a blessed time.

Tim. As thine is now, held with a brace of harlots.

Timan. Is this the Athenian minion, whom the world
Voiced so regardfully?

Tim. Art thou Timandra?

Timan. Yes.

Tim. Be a whore still: they love thee not that use thee;
Give them diseases, leaving with thee their lust.
Make use of thy salt hours: season the slaves
For tubs and baths; bring down rose-cheeked youth

To the tub-fast and the diet.
Timan. Hang thee, monster!
Alcib. Pardon him, sweet Timandra; for his wits
Are drown'd and lost in his calamities.
I have but little gold of late, brave Timon,
The want whereof doth daily make revolt
In my penurious band: I have heard, and grieved,
How cursed Athens, mindless of thy worth,
Forgetting thy great deeds, when neighbour states,
But for thy sword and fortune, trod upon them,—
Tim. I prithee, beat thy drum, and get thee gone.
Alcib. I am thy friend, and pity thee, dear Timon.
Tim. How dost thou pity him whom thou dost trouble?
I had rather be alone.
Alcib. Why, fare thee well:
Here is some gold for thee.
Tim. Keep it, I cannot eat it.
Alcib. When I have laid proud Athens on a heap,—
Tim. Warr'st thou 'gainst Athens?
Alcib. Ay, Timon, and have cause.
Tim. The gods confound them all in thy conquest;
And thee after, when thou hast conquer'd!
Alcib. Why me, Timon?
Tim. That, by killing of villains,
Thou wast born to conquer my country.
Put up thy gold: go on,—here 's gold,—go on;
Be as a planetary plague, when Jove
Will o'er some high-viced city hang his poison

108. *planetary plague;* the result of being 'struck' by a planet (cf. *Hamlet*, i. 1. 162; *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3. 89).

In the sick air: let not thy sword skip one:
Pity not honour'd age for his white beard;
He is an usurer: strike me the counterfeit matron:
It is her habit only that is honest,
Herself 's a bawd: let not the virgin's cheek
Make soft thy trenchant sword; for those milk-paps,
That through the window-bars bore at men's eyes,
Are not within the leaf of pity writ,
But set them down horrible traitors: spare not the babe,
Whose dimpled smiles from fools exhaust their mercy;
Think it a bastard, whom the oracle
Hath doubtfully pronounced thy throat shall cut,
And mince it sans remorse: swear against objects;
Put armour on thine ears and on thine eyes,
Whose proof, nor yells of mothers, maids, nor babes,
Nor sight of priests in holy vestments bleeding,
Shall pierce a jot. There 's gold to pay thy soldiers;
Make large confusion; and, thy fury spent,
Confounded be thyself! Speak not, be gone.

Alcib. Hast thou gold yet? I 'll take the gold thou givest me,
Not all thy counsel.

Tim. Dost thou, or dost thou not, heaven's curse upon thee!

Phr. and Timan. Give us some gold, good Timon: hast thou more?

Tim. Enough to make a whore forswear her trade,
And, to make whores, a bawd. Hold up, you sluts,
Your aprons mountant: you are not oathable,—
Although, I know, you 'll swear, terribly swear

122. *objects*, i.e. of dislike.

Into strong shudders and to heavenly agues
The immortal gods that hear you,—spare your oaths,
I 'll trust to your conditions: be whores still;
And he whose pious breath seeks to convert you,
Be strong in whore, allure him, burn him up;
Let your close fire predominate his smoke,
And be no turncoats: yet may your pains, six months,
Be quite contrary: and thatch your poor thin roofs
With burthens of the dead;— some that were hang'd,
No matter:—wear them, betray with them: whore still;
Paint till a horse may mire upon your face.
A pox of wrinkles!
Phr. and Timan. Well, more gold: what then?
Believe 't, that we 'll do any thing for gold.
Tim. Consumptions sow
In hollow bones of man; strike their sharp shins,
And mar men's spurring. Crack the lawyer's voice,
That he may never more false title plead,
Nor sound his quillets shrilly: hoar the flamen,
That scolds against the quality of flesh,
And not believes himself: down with the nose,
Down with it flat; take the bridge quite away
Of him that, his particular to foresee,
Smells from the general weal: make curl'd-pate ruffians bald;
And let the unscarr'd braggarts of the war
Derive some pain from you: plague all;
That your activity may defeat and quell
The source of all erection. There 's more gold:

155. *quillets*, 'quidlibets,' legal subtleties. 159. *particular*, private concern.

Do you damn others, and let this damn you,
And ditches grave you all!

Phr. and Timan. More counsel with more money, bounteous Timon.

Tim. More whore, more mischief first; I have given you earnest.

Alcib. Strike up the drum towards Athens! Farewell, Timon:

If I thrive well, I 'll visit thee again.

Tim. If I hope well, I 'll never see thee more.

Alcib. I never did thee harm.

Tim. Yes, thou spokest well of me.

Alcib. Call'st thou that harm?

Tim. Men daily find it. Get thee away, and take
Thy beagles with thee.

Alcib. We but offend him. Strike!

[*Drum beats. Exeunt Alcibiades, Phrynia, and Timandra.*

Tim. That nature, being sick of man's unkindness,
Should yet be hungry! Common mother, thou,

[*Digging.*

Whose womb unmeasurable, and infinite breast,
Teems, and feeds all; whose self-same mettle,
Whereof thy proud child, arrogant man, is puff'd,
Engenders the black toad and adder blue,
The gilded newt and eyeless venom'd worm,
With all the abhorred births below crisp heaven
Whereon Hyperion's quickening fire doth shine;
Yield him, who all thy human sons doth hate,

179. *mettle*, material.

181-183. *adder blue*, etc. The adder, the only poisonous English snake, is earth-coloured; by blue is probably meant 'livid.' The blind-worm is not venomous, but was currently believed to be so.

184. *Hyperion*, the sun god.

From forth thy plenteous bosom, one poor root!
Ensear thy fertile and conceptious womb,
Let it no more bring out ingrateful man!
Go great with tigers, dragons, wolves, and bears;
Teem with new monsters, whom thy upward face
Hath to the marbled mansion all above
Never presented!—O, a root,—dear thanks!—
Dry up thy marrows, vines, and plough-torn leas;
Whereof ingrateful man, with liquorish draughts
And morsels unctuous, greases his pure mind,
That from it all consideration slips!

Enter APEMANTUS.

More man? plague, plague!
Apem. I was directed hither: men report
Thou dost affect my manners, and dost use them.
Tim. 'Tis, then, because thou dost not keep a dog,
Whom I would imitate: consumption catch thee!
Apem. This is in thee a nature but infected;
A poor unmanly melancholy sprung
From change of fortune. Why this spade? this place?
This slave-like habit? and these looks of care?
Thy flatterers yet wear silk, drink wine, lie soft;
Hug their diseased perfumes, and have forgot
That ever Timon was. Shame not these woods,
By putting on the cunning of a carper.
Be thou a flatterer now, and seek to thrive
By that which has undone thee: hinge thy knee,
And let his very breath, whom thou 'lt observe,
Blow off thy cap; praise his most vicious strain,
And call it excellent: thou wast told thus;

191. *marbled*, eternal, enduring. The sky was conceived as a solid framework or 'firmament.'

202. *infected*, caught by infection, not inborn.

Thou gavest thine ears like tapsters that bid welcome
To knaves and all approachers: 'tis most just
That thou turn rascal; hadst thou wealth again,
Rascals should have 't. Do not assume my likeness.

Tim. Were I like thee, I 'ld throw away myself.

Apem. Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself;
A madman so long, now a fool. What, think'st
That the bleak air, thy boisterous chamberlain,
Will put thy shirt on warm? will these moss'd trees,
That have outlived the eagle, page thy heels,
And skip where thou point'st out? will the cold brook,
Candied with ice, caudle thy morning taste,
To cure thy o'er-night's surfeit? Call the creatures
Whose naked natures live in all the spite
Of wreakful heaven, whose bare unhoused trunks,
To the conflicting elements exposed,
Answer mere nature; bid them flatter thee;
O, thou shalt find—

Tim. A fool of thee: depart.

Apem. I love thee better now than e'er I did.

Tim. I hate thee worse.

Apem. Why?

Tim. Thou flatter'st misery.

Apem. I flatter not; but say thou art a catiff.

Tim. Why dost thou seek me out?

Apem. To vex thee.

Tim. Always a villain's office or a fool's.
Dost please thyself in 't?

Apem. Ay.

Tim. What! a knave too?

Apem. If thou didst put this sour-cold habit on

226. *caudle*, serve as a caudle, refresh.

To castigate thy pride, 'twere well: but thou
Dost it enforcedly; thou 'ldst courtier be again,
Wert thou not beggar. Willing misery
Outlives incertain pomp, is crown'd before:
The one is filling still, never complete;
The other, at high wish: best state, contentless,
Hath a distracted and most wretched being,
Worse than the worst, content.
Thou shouldst desire to die, being miserable.
Tim. Not by his breath that is more miserable.
Thou art a slave, whom Fortune's tender arm
With favour never clasp'd; but bred a dog.
Hadst thou, like us from our first swath, proceeded
The sweet degrees that this brief world affords
To such as may the passive drugs of it
Freely command, thou wouldst have plunged thyself
In general riot; melted down thy youth
In different beds of lust; and never learn'd
The icy precepts of respect, but follow'd
The sugar'd game before thee. But myself,
Who had the world as my confectionary,
The mouths, the tongues, the eyes and hearts of men
At duty, more than I could frame employment;
That numberless upon me stuck as leaves
Do on the oak, have with one winter's brush
Fell from their boughs and left me open, bare
For every storm that blows: I, to bear this,
That never knew but better, is some burden:
Thy nature did commence in sufferance, time
Hath made thee hard in 't. Why shouldst thou hate men?
They never flatter'd thee: what hast thou given?

260. *confectionary*, sweetmeat store.

If thou wilt curse, thy father, that poor rag,
Must be thy subject, who in spite put stuff
To some she beggar and compounded thee
Poor rogue hereditary. Hence, be gone!
If thou hadst not been born the worst of men,
Thou hadst been a knave and flatterer.

Apem. Art thou proud yet?

Tim. Ay, that I am not thee.

Apem. I, that I was
No prodigal.

Tim. I, that I am one now:
Were all the wealth I have shut up in thee,
I 'ld give thee leave to hang it. Get thee gone.
That the whole life of Athens were in this!
Thus would I eat it. [*Eating a root.*

Apem. Here; I will mend thy feast.
[*Offering him a root.*

Tim. First mend my company, take away thyself.

Apem. So I shall mend mine own, by the lack of thine.

Tim. 'Tis not well mended so, it is but botch'd; if not, I would it were.

Apem. What wouldst thou have to Athens?

Tim. Thee thither in a whirlwind. If thou wilt, Tell them there I have gold; look, so I have.

Apem. Here is no use for gold.

Tim. The best and truest;
For here it sleeps, and does no hired harm.

Apem. Where liest o' nights, Timon?

Tim. Under that 's above me.
Where feed'st thou o' days, Apemantus?

Apem. Where my stomach finds meat; or, rather, where I eat it.

Tim. Would poison were obedient and knew my mind!

Apem. Where wouldst thou send it?

Tim. To sauce thy dishes.

Apem. The middle of humanity thou never knewest, but the extremity of both ends: when thou wast in thy gilt and thy perfume, they mocked thee for too much curiosity; in thy rags thou knowest none, but art despised for the contrary. There's a medlar for thee, eat it.

Tim. On what I hate I feed not.

Apem. Dost hate a medlar?

Tim. Ay, though it look like thee.

Apem. An thou hadst hated meddlers sooner, thou shouldst have loved thyself better now. What man didst thou ever know unthrift that was beloved after his means?

Tim. Who, without those means thou talkest of, didst thou ever know beloved?

Apem. Myself.

Tim. I understand thee; thou hadst some means to keep a dog.

Apem. What things in the world canst thou nearest compare to thy flatterers?

Tim. Women nearest; but men, men are the things themselves. What wouldst thou do with the world, Apemantus, if it lay in thy power?

Apem. Give it the beasts, to be rid of the men.

Tim. Wouldst thou have thyself fall in the confusion of men, and remain a beast with the beasts?

Apem. Ay, Timon.

Tim. A beastly ambition, which the gods grant thee t' attain to! If thou wert the lion, the fox would beguile thee: if thou wert the lamb, the fox would eat thee: if thou wert the fox, the lion would suspect thee, when peradventure thou wert accused by the ass: if thou wert the ass, thy

dulness would torment thee, and still thou livedst but as a breakfast to the wolf: if thou wert the wolf, thy greediness would afflict thee, and oft thou shouldst hazard thy life for thy dinner: wert thou the unicorn, pride and wrath would confound thee and make thine own self the conquest of thy fury: wert thou a bear, thou wouldst be killed by the horse: wert thou a horse, thou wouldst be seized by the leopard: wert thou a leopard, thou wert german to the lion and the spots of thy kindred were jurors on thy life: all thy safety were remotion and thy defence absence. What beast couldst thou be, that were not subject to a beast? and what a beast art thou already, that seest not thy loss in transformation!

Apem. If thou couldst please me with speaking to me, thou mightst have hit upon it here: the commonwealth of Athens is become a forest of beasts.

Tim. How has the ass broke the wall, that thou art out of the city?

Apem. Yonder comes a poet and a painter: the plague of company light upon thee! I will fear to catch it and give way: when I know not what else to do, I'll see thee again.

Tim. When there is nothing living but thee, thou shalt be welcome. I had rather be a beggar's dog than Apemantus.

Apem. Thou art the cap of all the fools alive.

Tim. Would thou wert clean enough to spit upon!

Apem. A plague on thee! thou art too bad to curse.

Tim. All villains that do stand by thee are pure.

Apem. There is no leprosy but what thou speak'st.

346. *remotion*, a keeping aloof.

Tim. If I name thee.
I 'll beat thee, but I should infect my hands.
Apem. I would my tongue could rot them off!
Tim. Away, thou issue of a mangy dog!
Choler does kill me that thou art alive;
I swound to see thee.
Apem. Would thou wouldst burst!
Tim. Away,
Thou tedious rogue! I am sorry I shall lose
A stone by thee. [*Throws a stone at him.*
Apem. Beast!
Tim. Slave!
Apem. Toad!
Tim. Rogue, rogue, rogue!
I am sick of this false world, and will love nought
But even the mere necessities upon 't.
Then, Timon, presently prepare thy grave;
Lie where the light foam of the sea may beat
Thy grave-stone daily: make thine epitaph,
That death in me at others' lives may laugh.
[*To the gold*] O thou sweet king-killer, and dear divorce
'Twixt natural son and sire! thou bright defiler
Of Hymen's purest bed! thou valiant Mars!
Thou ever young, fresh, loved and delicate wooer,
Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow
That lies on Dian's lap! thou visible god,
That solder'st close impossibilities,
And makest them kiss! that speak'st with every tongue,
To every purpose! O thou touch of hearts!
Think, thy slave man rebels, and by thy virtue
Set them into confounding odds, that beasts
May have the world in empire!
Apem. Would 'twere so!

390. *touch*, touchstone, test.

But not till I am dead. I 'll say thou 'st gold:
Thou wilt be throng'd to shortly.

Tim. Throng'd to!

Apem. Ay.

Tim. Thy back, I prithee.

Apem. Live, and love thy misery.

Tim. Long live so, and so die. [*Exit Apemantus.*] I am quit.
Moe things like men! Eat, Timon, and abhor them.

Enter Banditti.

First Ban. Where should he have this gold? It is some poor fragment, some slender ort of his remainder: the mere want of gold, and the falling-from of his friends, drove him into this melancholy.

Sec. Ban. It is noised he hath a mass of treasure.

Third Ban. Let us make the assay upon him: if he care not for 't, he will supply us easily; if he covetously reserve it, how shall 's get it?

Sec. Ban. True; for he bears it not about him, 'tis hid.

First Ban. Is not this he?

Banditti. Where?

Sec. Ban. 'Tis his description.

Third Ban. He; I know him.

Banditti. Save thee, Timon.

Tim. Now, thieves?

Banditti. Soldiers, not thieves.

Tim. Both too; and women's sons.

Banditti. We are not thieves, but men that much do want.

Tim. Your greatest want is, you want much of meat.

400. *ort*, remnant.

Why should you want? Behold, the earth hath
roots;
Within this mile break forth a hundred springs;
The oaks bear mast, the briers scarlet hips;
The bounteous housewife, nature, on each bush
Lays her full mess before you. Want! why want?
First Ban. We cannot live on grass, on berries,
water,
As beasts and birds and fishes.
Tim. Nor on the beasts themselves, the birds,
and fishes;
You must eat men. Yet thanks I must you con
That you are thieves profess'd, that you work not
In holier shapes: for there is boundless theft
In limited professions. Rascal thieves,
Here 's gold. Go, suck the subtle blood o' the
grape,
Till the high fever seethe your blood to froth,
And so 'scape hanging: trust not the physician;
His antidotes are poison, and he slays
Moe than you rob: take wealth and lives together;
Do villany, do, since you protest to do 't,
Like workmen. I 'll example you with thievery:
The sun 's a thief, and with his great attraction
Robs the vast sea: the moon 's an arrant thief,
And her pale fire she snatches from the sun:
The sea 's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves
The moon into salt tears: the earth 's a thief,
That feeds and breeds by a composture stolen
From general excrement: each thing 's a thief:
The laws, your curb and whip, in their rough power
Have uncheck'd theft. Love not yourselves: away,
Rob one another. There 's more gold. Cut throats:

422. *mast;* a term for the edible fruit of forest trees, usually applied to the beech-nut.
424. *mess*, portion of food.
428. *thanks I must you con*, I must be thankful to you for it.

All that you meet are thieves: to Athens go,
Break open shops; nothing can you steal,
But thieves do lose it: steal no less for this
I give you; and gold confound you howsoe'er!
Amen.

Third Ban. Has almost charmed me from my profession, by persuading me to it.

First Ban. 'Tis in the malice of mankind that he thus advises us; not to have us thrive in our mystery.

Sec. Ban. I'll believe him as an enemy, and give over my trade.

First Ban. Let us first see peace in Athens: there is no time so miserable but a man may be true. [*Exeunt Banditti.*

Enter FLAVIUS.

Flav. O you gods!
Is yond despised and ruinous man my lord?
Full of decay and failing? O monument
And wonder of good deeds evilly bestow'd!
What an alteration of honour
Has desperate want made!
What viler thing upon the earth than friends
Who can bring noblest minds to basest ends!
How rarely does it meet with this time's guise,
When man was wish'd to love his enemies!
Grant I may ever love, and rather woo
Those that would mischief me than those that do!
Has caught me in his eye: I will present
My honest grief unto him; and, as my lord,
Still serve him with my life. My dearest master!

Tim. Away! what art thou?

Flav. Have you forgot me, sir?

Tim. Why dost ask that? I have forgot all men;

Then, if thou grant'st thou 'rt a man, I have forgot thee.

Flav. An honest poor servant of yours.

Tim. Then I know thee not:
I never had honest man about me, I; all
I kept were knaves, to serve in meat to villains.

Flav. The gods are witness,
Ne'er did poor steward wear a truer grief
For his undone lord than mine eyes for you.

Tim. What, dost thou weep? Come nearer. Then I love thee,
Because thou art a woman, and disclaim'st
Flinty mankind; whose eyes do never give
But thorough lust and laughter. Pity 's sleeping:
Strange times, that weep with laughing, not with weeping!

Flav. I beg of you to know me, good my lord,
To accept my grief and whilst this poor wealth lasts
To entertain me as your steward still.

Tim. Had I a steward
So true, so just, and now so comfortable?
It almost turns my dangerous nature mild.
Let me behold thy face. Surely, this man
Was born of woman.
Forgive my general and exceptless rashness,
You perpetual-sober gods! I do proclaim
One honest man—mistake me not—but one;
No more, I pray,—and he 's a steward.
How fain would I have hated all mankind!
And thou redeem'st thyself: but all, save thee,
I fell with curses.
Methinks thou art more honest now than wise;
For, by oppressing and betraying me,

498. *comfortable*, serviceable, helpful. 502. *exceptless*, absolute, making no exception.

Thou mightst have sooner got another service:
For many so arrive at second masters,
Upon their first lord's neck. But tell me true—
For I must ever doubt, though ne'er so sure—
Is not thy kindness subtle, covetous,
If not a usuring kindness, and, as rich men deal gifts,
Expecting in return twenty for one?
Flav. No, my most worthy master; in whose breast
Doubt and suspect, alas, are placed too late:
You should have fear'd false times when you did feast:
Suspect still comes where an estate is least.
That which I show, heaven knows, is merely love,
Duty and zeal to your unmatched mind,
Care of your food and living; and, believe it,
My most honour'd lord,
For any benefit that points to me,
Either in hope or present, I 'ld exchange
For this one wish, that you had power and wealth
To requite me, by making rich yourself.
Tim. Look thee, 'tis so! Thou singly honest man,
Here, take: the gods out of my misery
Have sent thee treasure. Go, live rich and happy;
But thus condition'd: thou shalt build from men:
Hate all, curse all, show charity to none,
But let the famish'd flesh slide from the bone,
Ere thou relieve the beggar; give to dogs
What thou deny'st to men; let prisons swallow 'em,
Debts wither 'em to nothing; be men like blasted woods,
And may diseases lick up their false bloods!

521. *Suspect*, suspicion.

And so farewell and thrive.

Flav. O, let me stay,
And comfort you, my master.

Tim. If thou hatest curses,
Stay not; fly, whilst thou art blest and free:
Ne'er see thou man, and let me ne'er see thee.

[*Exit Flavius. Timon retires to his cave.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The woods. Before Timon's cave.*

Enter Poet *and* Painter; TIMON *watching them from his cave.*

Pain. As I took note of the place, it cannot be far where he abides.

Poet. What 's to be thought of him? does the rumour hold for true, that he 's so full of gold?

Pain. Certain: Alcibiades reports it; Phrynia and Timandra had gold of him: he likewise enriched poor straggling soldiers with great quantity: 'tis said he gave unto his steward a mighty sum.

Poet. Then this breaking of his has been but a try for his friends.

Pain. Nothing else: you shall see him a palm in Athens again, and flourish with the highest. Therefore 'tis not amiss we tender our loves to him, in this supposed distress of his; it will show honestly in us; and is very likely to load our purposes with what they travail for, if it be a just and true report that goes of his having.

11. *try for*, test of.

Poet. What have you now to present unto him?

Pain. Nothing at this time but my visitation: only I will promise him an excellent piece.

Poet. I must serve him so too, tell him of an intent that's coming toward him.

Pain. Good as the best. Promising is the very air o' the time: it opens the eyes of expectation: performance is ever the duller for his act; and, but in the plainer and simpler kind of people, the deed of saying is quite out of use. To promise is most courtly and fashionable: performance is a kind of will or testament which argues a great sickness in his judgement that makes it.

[*Timon comes from his cave, behind.*

Tim. [*Aside*] Excellent workman! thou canst not paint a man so bad as is thyself.

Poet. I am thinking what I shall say I have provided for him: it must be a personating of himself; a satire against the softness of prosperity, with a discovery of the infinite flatteries that follow youth and opulency.

Tim. [*Aside*] Must thou needs stand for a villain in thine own work? wilt thou whip thine own faults in other men? Do so, I have gold for thee.

Poet. Nay, let's seek him:
Then do we sin against our own estate,
When we may profit meet, and come too late.

Pain. True;
When the day serves, before black-corner'd night,
Find what thou want'st by free and offer'd light.
Come.

Tim. [*Aside*] I'll meet you at the turn. What a god's gold,
That he is worshipp'd in a baser temple

28. *the deed of saying*, the performance of promises.

Than where swine feed!
'Tis thou that rigg'st the bark and plough'st the foam,
Settlest admired reverence in a slave:
To thee be worship! and thy saints for aye
Be crown'd with plagues that thee alone obey!
Fit I meet them. [*Coming forward.*
Poet. Hail, worthy Timon!
Pain. Our late noble master!
Tim. Have I once lived to see two honest men?
Poet. Sir,
Having often of your open bounty tasted,
Hearing you were retired, your friends fall'n off,
Whose thankless natures—O abhorred spirits!—
Not all the whips of heaven are large enough:
What! to you,
Whose star-like nobleness gave life and influence
To their whole being! I am rapt and cannot cover
The monstrous bulk of this ingratitude
With any size of words.
Tim. Let it go naked, men may see 't the better.
You that are honest, by being what you are,
Make them best seen and known.
Pain. He and myself
Have travail'd in the great shower of your gifts,
And sweetly felt it.
Tim. Ay, you are honest men.
Pain. We are hither come to offer you our service.
Tim. Most honest men! Why, how shall I requite you?
Can you eat roots, and drink cold water? no.
Both. What we can do, we 'll do, to do you service.

66. *influence;* a technical term for the inflow of planetary agency upon human affairs.

Tim. Ye're honest men: ye've heard that I have gold;
I am sure you have: speak truth; ye're honest men.
Pain. So it is said, my noble lord; but therefore
Came not my friend nor I.
Tim. Good honest men! Thou draw'st a counterfeit
Best in all Athens: thou'rt, indeed, the best;
Thou counterfeit'st most lively.
Pain. So so, my lord.
Tim. E'en so, sir, as I say. And, for thy fiction,
Why, thy verse swells with stuff so fine and smooth
That thou art even natural in thine art.
But, for all this, my honest-natured friends,
I must needs say you have a little fault:
Marry, 'tis not monstrous in you, neither wish I
You take much pains to mend.
Both. Beseech your honour
To make it known to us.
Tim. You'll take it ill.
Both. Most thankfully, my lord.
Tim. Will you, indeed?
Both. Doubt it not, worthy lord.
Tim. There's never a one of you but trusts a knave,
That mightily deceives you.
Both. Do we, my lord?
Tim. Ay, and you hear him cog, see him dissemble,
Know his gross patchery, love him, feed him,
Keep in your bosom: yet remain assured
That he's a made-up villain.
Pain. I know none such, my lord.

98. *cog*, deceive.
99. *patchery*, blundering hypocrisy, which, like a clumsy patch, fails to hide the fault.

Poet. Nor I.
Tim. Look you, I love you well; I 'll give you gold,
Rid me these villains from your companies:
Hang them or stab them, drown them in a draught,
Confound them by some course, and come to me,
I 'll give you gold enough.
Both. Name them, my lord, let 's know them.
Tim. You that way and you this, but two in company;
Each man apart, all single and alone,
Yet an arch-villain keeps him company.
If where thou art two villains shall not be,
Come not near him. If thou wouldst not reside
But where one villain is, then him abandon.
Hence, pack! there 's gold; you came for gold, ye slaves:
[*To Painter*] You have work'd for me; there 's payment for you: hence!
[*To Poet*] You are an alchemist; make gold of that.
Out, rascal dogs! [*Beats them out, and then retires to his cave.*

Enter FLAVIUS *and two* Senators.

Flav. It is in vain that you would speak with Timon;
For he is set so only to himself
That nothing but himself which looks like man
Is friendly with him.
First Sen. Bring us to his cave:
It is our part and promise to the Athenians
To speak with Timon.
Sec. Sen. At all times alike
Men are not still the same: 'twas time and griefs
That framed him thus: time, with his fairer hand,
Offering the fortunes of his former days,

The former man may make him. Bring us to him,
And chance it as it may.
Flav. Here is his cave.
Peace and content be here! Lord Timon! Timon!
Look out, and speak to friends: the Athenians,
By two of their most reverend senate, greet thee:
Speak to them, noble Timon.

TIMON *comes from his cave.*

Tim. Thou sun, that comfort'st, burn! Speak and be hang'd:
For each true word, a blister! and each false
Be as a cauterizing to the root o' the tongue,
Consuming it with speaking!
First Sen. Worthy Timon,—
Tim. Of none but such as you, and you of Timon.
First Sen. The senators of Athens greet thee, Timon.
Tim. I thank them; and would send them back the plague,
Could I but catch it for them.
First Sen. O, forget
What we are sorry for ourselves in thee.
The senators with one consent of love
Entreat thee back to Athens; who have thought
On special dignities, which vacant lie
For thy best use and wearing.
Sec. Sen. They confess
Toward thee forgetfulness too general, gross:
Which now the public body, which doth seldom
Play the recanter, feeling in itself
A lack of Timon's aid, hath sense withal
Of it own fail, restraining aid to Timon;
And send forth us, to make their sorrow'd render,

152. *sorrow'd render*, sorrowful confession.

Together with a recompense more fruitful
Than their offence can weigh down by the dram;
Ay, even such heaps and sums of love and wealth
As shall to thee blot out what wrongs were theirs
And write in thee the figures of their love,
Ever to read them thine.
Tim. You witch me in it,
Surprise me to the very brink of tears:
Lend me a fool's heart and a woman's eyes,
And I 'll beweep these comforts, worthy senators.
First Sen. Therefore, so please thee to return with us
And of our Athens, thine and ours, to take
The captainship, thou shalt be met with thanks,
Allow'd with absolute power and thy good name
Live with authority: so soon we shall drive back
Of Alcibiades the approaches wild,
Who, like a boar too savage, doth root up
His country's peace.
Sec. Sen. And shakes his threatening sword
Against the walls of Athens.
First Sen. Therefore, Timon,—
Tim. Well, sir, I will; therefore, I will, sir; thus:
If Alcibiades kill my countrymen,
Let Alcibiades know this of Timon,
That Timon cares not. But if he sack fair Athens,
And take our goodly aged men by the beards,
Giving our holy virgins to the stain
Of contumelious, beastly, mad-brain'd war,
Then let him know, and tell him Timon speaks it,
In pity of our aged and our youth,
I cannot choose but tell him, that I care not,
And let him take 't at worst; for their knives care not,

165. *Allow'd with*, authoritatively invested with.

While you have throats to answer: for myself,
There 's not a whittle in the unruly camp
But I do prize it at my love before
The reverend'st throat in Athens. So I leave you
To the protection of the prosperous gods,
As thieves to keepers.
Flav. . Stay not, all 's in vain.
Tim. Why, I was writing of my epitaph;
It will be seen to-morrow: my long sickness
Of health and living now begins to mend,
And nothing brings me all things. Go, live still;
Be Alcibiades your plague, you his,
And last so long enough!
First Sen. We speak in vain.
Tim. But yet I love my country, and am not
One that rejoices in the common wreck,
As common bruit doth put it.
First Sen. That 's well spoke.
Tim. Commend me to my loving countrymen,—
First Sen. These words become your lips as they pass thorough them.
Sec. Sen. And enter in our ears like great triumphers
In their applauding gates.
Tim. Commend me to them,
And tell them that, to ease them of their griefs,
Their fears of hostile strokes, their aches, losses,
Their pangs of love, with other incident throes
That nature's fragile vessel doth sustain
In life's uncertain voyage, I will some kindness do them:
I 'll teach them to prevent wild Alcibiades' wrath.
First Sen. I like this well; he will return again
Tim. I have a tree, which grows here in my close,

202. *aches* (disyllabic; *ch*=*tsh*).

That mine own use invites me to cut down,
And shortly must I fell it: tell my friends,
Tell Athens, in the sequence of degree
From high to low throughout, that whoso please
To stop affliction, let him take his haste,
Come hither, ere my tree hath felt the axe,
And hang himself. I pray you, do my greeting.

Flav. Trouble him no further; thus you still shall find him.

Tim. Come not to me again: but say to Athens,
Timon hath made his everlasting mansion
Upon the beached verge of the salt flood;
Who once a day with his embossed froth
The turbulent surge shall cover: thither come,
And let my grave-stone be your oracle.
Lips, let sour words go by and language end:
What is amiss plague and infection mend!
Graves only be men's works and death their gain!
Sun, hide thy beams! Timon hath done his reign.

[*Retires to his cave.*

First Sen. His discontents are unremoveably
Coupled to nature.

Sec. Sen. Our hope in him is dead: let us return,
And strain what other means is left unto us
In our dear peril.

First Sen. It requires swift foot. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Before the walls of Athens.*

Enter two Senators *and a* Messenger.

First Sen. Thou hast painfully discover'd: are his files
As full as thy report?

220. *embossed*, swollen. 231. *dear*, grievous.

Mess. I have spoke the least:
Besides, his expedition promises
Present approach.
Sec. Sen. We stand much hazard, if they bring not Timon.
Mess. I met a courier, one mine ancient friend;
Whom, though in general part we were opposed,
Yet our old love made a particular force,
And made us speak like friends: this man was riding
From Alcibiades to Timon's cave,
With letters of entreaty, which imported
His fellowship i' the cause against your city,
In part for his sake moved.
First Sen. Here come our brothers.

Enter the Senators *from* TIMON.

Third Sen. No talk of Timon, nothing of him expect.
The enemies' drum is heard, and fearful scouring
Doth choke the air with dust: in, and prepare:
Ours is the fall, I fear; our foes the snare.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The woods. Timon's cave, and a rude tomb seen.*

Enter a Soldier, *seeking* TIMON.

Sold. By all description this should be the place.
Who 's here? speak, ho! No answer! What is this?

4. *Present*, immediate.

7. *Whom*, anticipating 'him' implied in 'us,' v. 9.

8. *made.* This is perhaps an error due to the 'made' in the next line. But it yields a fair sense: our old love formed a special influence which neutralised our political antagonism.

Timon is dead, who hath outstretch'd his span:
Some beast rear'd this; there does not live a man.
Dead, sure; and this his grave. What's on this tomb
I cannot read; the character I'll take with wax:
Our captain hath in every figure skill,
An aged interpreter, though young in days:
Before proud Athens he's set down by this,
Whose fall the mark of his ambition is. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Before the walls of Athens.*

Trumpets sound. Enter ALCIBIADES *with his powers.*

Alcib. Sound to this coward and lascivious town
Our terrible approach. [*A parley sounded.*

Enter Senators *on the walls.*

Till now you have gone on and fill'd the time
With all licentious measure, making your wills
The scope of justice; till now myself and such
As slept within the shadow of your power
Have wander'd with our traversed arms and breathed
Our sufferance vainly; now the time is flush,

4. *Some beast rear'd this*, etc. So Warburton for Ff 'read.' The man-hater must have received these burial honours from his fellows, not from man. It is hardly possible to give a meaning to 'read' which does not involve glaring contradiction in what follows. 'There does not live a man who can [or is fit to] read it.' But the soldier proceeds to take for granted that Alcibiades can. For a similar reason it cannot be maintained that vv. 3, 4 represent an inscription on or near the tomb. The actual inscription is given v. 4. 70, and the soldier 'cannot read.'

7. *figure*, handwriting.

8. *flush*, full, complete.

When crouching marrow in the bearer strong
Cries of itself 'No more:' now breathless wrong
Shall sit and pant in your great chairs of ease,
And pursy insolence shall break his wind
With fear and horrid flight.
First Sen. Noble and young,
When thy first griefs were but a mere conceit,
Ere thou hadst power or we had cause of fear,
We sent to thee, to give thy rages balm,
To wipe out our ingratitude with loves
Above their quantity.
Sec. Sen. So did we woo
Transformed Timon to our city's love
By humble message and by promised means:
We were not all unkind, nor all deserve
The common stroke of war.
First Sen. These walls of ours
Were not erected by their hands from whom
You have received your griefs: nor are they such
That these great towers, trophies and schools should fall
For private faults in them.
Sec. Sen. Nor are they living
Who were the motives that you first went out;
Shame that they wanted cunning, in excess
Hath broke their hearts. March, noble lord,
Into our city with thy banners spread:
By decimation, and a tithed death—
If thy revenges hunger for that food
Which nature loathes—take thou the destined tenth,
And by the hazard of the spotted die
Let die the spotted.
First Sen. All have not offended;

14. *conceit*, fancy.
28. *Shame that they wanted cunning, in excess*, extreme shame that they lacked wisdom.

For those that were, it is not square to take
On those that are, revenges : crimes, like lands,
Are not inherited. Then, dear countryman,
Bring in thy ranks, but leave without thy rage :
Spare thy Athenian cradle and those kin
Which in the bluster of thy wrath must fall
With those that have offended : like a shepherd,
Approach the fold and cull the infected forth,
But kill not all together.

Sec. Sen. What thou wilt,
Thou rather shalt enforce it with thy smile
Than hew to 't with thy sword.

First Sen. Set but thy foot
Against our rampired gates, and they shall ope ;
So thou wilt send thy gentle heart before,
To say thou 'lt enter friendly.

Sec. Sen. Throw thy glove,
Or any token of thine honour else,
That thou wilt use the wars as thy redress
And not as our confusion, all thy powers
Shall make their harbour in our town, till we
Have seal'd thy full desire.

Alcib. Then there 's my glove ;
Descend, and open your uncharged ports :
Those enemies of Timon's and mine own
Whom you yourselves shall set out for reproof
Fall and no more : and, to atone your fears
With my more noble meaning, not a man
Shall pass his quarter, or offend the stream
Of regular justice in your city's bounds,
But shall be render'd to your public laws
At heaviest answer.

Both. 'Tis most nobly spoken.

Alcib. Descend, and keep your words.

[*The Senators descend, and open the gates.*

36. *square*, right. 47. *rampired*, fortified with ramparts.

Enter Soldier.

Sold. My noble general, Timon is dead;
Entomb'd upon the very hem o' the sea;
And on his grave-stone this insculpture, which
With wax I brought away, whose soft impression
Interprets for my poor ignorance.

Alcib. [*Reads the epitaph*] 'Here lies a wretched corse, of wretched soul bereft:
Seek not my name: a plague consume you wicked caitiffs left!
Here lie I, Timon; who, alive, all living men did hate:
Pass by and curse thy fill, but pass and stay not here thy gait.'
These well express in thee thy latter spirits:
Though thou abhorr'dst in us our human griefs,
Scorn'dst our brain's flow and those our droplets which
From niggard nature fall, yet rich conceit
Taught thee to make vast Neptune weep for aye
On thy low grave, on faults forgiven. Dead
Is noble Timon: of whose memory
Hereafter more. Bring me into your city,
And I will use the olive with my sword,
Make war breed peace, make peace stint war, make each
Prescribe to other as each other's leech.
Let our drums strike. [*Exeunt.*

70-73. The first two lines are a rendering of Timon's own epitaph; the last two were ascribed generally to the poet Callimachus. Lines 71-72 are contradictions. Both epitaphs, however, occur in close succession in the Plutarchian narrative, whence they were doubtless copied by the author without reflection.

VENUS AND ADONIS

INTRODUCTION

Venus and Adonis was first published in Quarto, in 1593, with the following title-page :—

Venus | and Adonis | *Vilia miretur vulgus : mihi flauus Apollo* | *Pocula Castalia plena ministret aqua.* | London | Imprinted by Richard Field, and are to be sold at | the signe of the white Greyhound in Paules Churchyard. | 1593.

A second edition followed in 1594 ; others rapidly succeeded, in 1596, 1599, 1600, 1602. By 1636 there were at least thirteen. Shakespeare dedicated it to the Earl of Southampton, in words that have become famous, as the 'first heir of his invention'; meaning probably that it was the first of his lyrical or narrative Poems, not that it had preceded all his plays. Its production falls without doubt within the three years preceding its appearance. These years were the golden prime of the Tale in Verse. In 1590 the first instalment of the *Faerie Queene* had set a magnificent and unique example. In the same year Thomas Lodge, a past master of prose romance, told the classic tale of *Glaucus and Silla* in verse full of Ovidian finesse, and echoing not unskilfully Ovid's fluid melody. A little later, but before 1593, Marlowe was at work upon the fragmentary paraphrase of the tale of *Hero and Leander*, completed after his death by Chapman, which stands alone in Eliza-

bethan narrative verse by its fiery intensity of passion and nervous energy of style. It is hardly doubtful that Shakespeare knew all three. But it was the second alone which palpably attracted and influenced him. Lodge had used the same six-line stanza, with that pleasant alternation of the quatrain and the couplet which Shakespeare seems to have preferred both to more complex and to more simple arrangements of rhyme; and the little episode on the story of Adonis over which Lodge lingers a while by the way is an essay in the same scheme of colour and in the same effects of verbal melody over which Shakespeare shows so secure a mastery in the poem before us.[1]

The poet of the *Venus and Adonis* had clearly drunk deep of the 'honey-tongued' Ovid with whom a few years later Francis Meres compared him. His manner, his melody, are full of Ovidian artifices and expedients. To Ovid's tale of Adonis, however (*Metam.* bk. x.), he owed very little,—hardly more than the transformation of his slain body into a flower (x. 735). The elementary situation which he found in Ovid he decorates with a profusion of beautiful inventions. His attitude towards the myth he handles is very like Ovid's own—the attitude of the artist not of the thinker; and in his utmost divergences from Ovid he dreams as little as he of that dawn-world of Eastern myth,—so effectually obscured by the metallic glitter

[1] Here are two stanzas :—

He that hath seen the sweet Arcadian boy
Wiping the purple from his forced wound,
His pretty tears betokening his annoy,
His sighs, his cries, his falling on the ground,
The echoes ringing from the rocks his fall,
The trees with tears reporting ot his thrall;
And Venus starting at her love-mate's cry,
Forcing her birds to haste her chariot on,
And full of grief at last with piteous eye,
Seen where all pale with death he lay alone,
Whose beauty quailed, as wont the lilies droop,
When wasteful winter winds do make them stoop.

of the Roman raconteur,—that dawn-world in which Adonis, in alternating seasons lost to Venus and restored to her, symbolised the passing of the life of Nature in autumn and its renewal in spring.

Yet the filling in of the story contains elements quite alien to Ovid. Every critic has dwelt upon the wealth of native observation,—the harvest of an eye not 'quiet' indeed, or brooding, or, as yet, subtle and profound, but marvellously accurate and alert, an eye which apprehends every individual trait and detail with a vividness that at times kills for the moment everything else in the picture. Nothing can exceed in explicit distinctness the descriptions of the horse and of the hunted hare; but the first is a classic example of realism which obscures reality in its eagerness to illuminate every corner of it: the horse is lost in its attributes. Far better is the description of the hare; where a touch as luminous as Ovid's works out effects caught not from his enamel and gold and marble, but from the dewy morning meads on Cotswold or by Avon. Yet there are other touches again not of Naturalism. 'There are,' as Mr. Wyndham has pointed out, 'wilful and half-humorous perversions of Nature. When Shakespeare in praise of Adonis' beauty says that—

> To see his face, the lion walked along
> Behind some hedge, because he would not fear him,

you feel that you are still in the age which painted St. Jerome's lion and St. Francis preaching to the birds.'[1] Yet it is to be noted that these perversions occur in the extravagant laments of Venus. They are not very convincingly dramatic, but they are dramatic in intention, symbols of the hyperbole of mortally wounded passion.

[1] G. Wyndham: *The Poems of Shakespeare*, p. lxxxv.

Venus and Adonis

Venus and Adonis was the famous book of its year, and for the greater part of a generation it remained without a rival in the Elizabethan library of choice erotics;—the delight of young lovers, the idol of undergraduates, the vademecum of the bashful wooer, the boudoir-companion of the fashionable courtesan. The chorus of praise first becomes distinct, to our ears, in 1598. Richard Barnfield in that year celebrated Shakespeare (in company with Spenser, Daniel, and Drayton) for his 'hony-flowing Vaine':—

> Whose *Venus* and whose *Lucrece* (sweet and chaste)
> Thy name in Fame's immortall Book have plac't.[1]

Meres, in the same year, delivered his famous testimony, in nearly similar terms, to 'the mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare,' in whom lives 'the sweet witty soul of Ovid,' as witness 'his *Venus and Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, his sugred Sonnets among his private friends.' Gullio in the *Return from Parnassus* (*c.* 1600) is resolved to have the picture of 'sweet Mr. Shakespeare' in his study at court, and 'to lay his *Venus and Adonis* under my pillow, as we read of one (I do not remember his name, but I am sure he was a king) slept with Homer under his bed's head.' 'Peele's' poetical Tapster had ingrossed *Venus and Adonis* among other poetic romances.[2] Heywood's Bowdler never read anything but *Venus and Adonis*;[3] and Sharpe's 'Pupillus' in *The Noble Stranger* (1640) longed, in the manner of Jonson's Master Stephen, 'for the book of *Venus and Adonis* to court

[1] 'A Remembrance of some English Poets,' in his *Poems in Divers Humors.*

[2] *Merrie Conceited Jests of George Peele.* Peele died in 1598; but the attribution is for the most part mythical.

[3] *The Fair Maid of the Exchange*, 1607.

my mistress by.' But a note of gentle criticism is early heard, and Shakespeare's subsequent career—nay, the very phrases of his own Dedication—went far to justify those who, with the Cambridge Judicio in the Third Parnassus play, wished to see 'his sweeter verse,' with its 'heart-throbbing life,' applied to 'a graver subject'

> Without love's foolish lazy languishment ;

or who, like the aging Gabriel Harvey, turned with some relief from the *Venus and Adonis*, in which 'the younger sort take much delight,' to 'his *Lucrece* and his Tragedy of *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*,' which 'have it in them to please the wiser sort.' Harvey had once, it is true, done his best to persuade Spenser to renounce the *Faerie Queene ;* his recognition of *Hamlet* shows that the 'pedantry' for which we brand his name did not rest entirely upon prosaic temper and bad taste.

VENUS AND ADONIS

'Vilia miretur vulgus; mihi flavus Apollo
Pocula Castalia plena ministret aqua.'

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY WRIOTHESLEY,

EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON, AND BARON OF TITCHFIELD.

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

I KNOW not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden: only, if your honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with some graver labour. But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a god-father, and never after ear so barren a land, for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your honourable survey, and your honour to your heart's content; which I wish may always answer your own wish and the world's hopeful expectation.

Your honour's in all duty,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

EVEN as the sun with purple-colour'd face
Had ta'en his last leave of the weeping morn,
Rose-cheek'd Adonis hied him to the chase;
Hunting he loved, but love he laugh'd to scorn;

3. *Adonis*, the son of Myrrha, and favourite of Aphrodite, was consigned to the care of Persephone, queen of the underworld, who refused to give him up to Aphrodite. Zeus, on appeal

Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain unto him,
And like a bold-faced suitor 'gins to woo him.

'Thrice-fairer than myself,' thus she began,
'The field's chief flower, sweet above compare,
Stain to all nymphs, more lovely than a man,
More white and red than doves or roses are;
Nature that made thee, with herself at strife,
Saith that the world hath ending with thy life.

'Vouchsafe, thou wonder, to alight thy steed,
And rein his proud head to the saddle-bow;
If thou wilt deign this favour, for thy meed
A thousand honey secrets shalt thou know:
Here come and sit, where never serpent hisses,
And being set, I'll smother thee with kisses;

'And yet not cloy thy lips with loathed satiety,
But rather famish them amid their plenty,
Making them red and pale with fresh variety;
Ten kisses short as one, one long as twenty:
A summer's day will seem an hour but short,
Being wasted in such time-beguiling sport.'

With this she seizeth on his sweating palm,
The precedent of pith and livelihood,
And trembling in her passion, calls it balm,
Earth's sovereign salve to do a goddess good:
Being so enraged, desire doth lend her force
Courageously to pluck him from his horse.

being made to him, decided that Adonis should spend four months of each year with Persephone, four with Aphrodite, and retain four for his own pleasure. He was wounded by a boar, and Aphrodite, unable to staunch the wound and save his life, won from Zeus the promise that Adonis should spend six months of each year with her.

9. *Stain*, source of disgrace, *i.e.* Adonis outshone them all.

26. *precedent*, indication.

ib. *pith*, virile energy.

Over one arm the lusty courser's rein,
Under her other was the tender boy,
Who blush'd and pouted in a dull disdain,
With leaden appetite, unapt to toy;
She red and hot as coals of glowing fire,
He red for shame, but frosty in desire.

The studded bridle on a ragged bough
Nimbly she fastens—O, how quick is love!—
The steed is stalled up, and even now
To tie the rider she begins to prove:
Backward she push'd him, as she would be thrust,
And govern'd him in strength, though not in lust.

So soon was she along as he was down,
Each leaning on their elbows and their hips:
Now doth she stroke his cheek, now doth he frown,
And 'gins to chide, but soon she stops his lips;
And kissing speaks, with lustful language broken,
'If thou wilt chide, thy lips shall never open.'

He burns with bashful shame; she with her tears
Doth quench the maiden burning of his cheeks;
Then with her windy sighs and golden hairs
To fan and blow them dry again she seeks:
He saith she is immodest, blames her miss;
What follows more she murders with a kiss.

Even as an empty eagle, sharp by fast,
Tires with her beak on feathers, flesh and bone,
Shaking her wings, devouring all in haste,
Till either gorge be stuff'd or prey be gone;
Even so she kissed his brow, his cheek, his chin,
And where she ends she doth anew begin.

53. *miss*, misbehaviour, offence. 56. *Tires*, tears in pieces.

Forced to content, but never to obey,
Panting he lies and breatheth in her face;
She feedeth on the steam as on a prey,
And calls it heavenly moisture, air of grace;
Wishing her cheeks were gardens full of flowers,
So they were dew'd with such distilling showers.

Look, how a bird lies tangled in a net,
So fasten'd in her arms Adonis lies;
Pure shame and awed resistance made him fret,
Which bred more beauty in his angry eyes:
Rain added to a river that is rank
Perforce will force it overflow the bank.

Still she entreats, and prettily entreats,
For to a pretty ear she tunes her tale;
Still is he sullen, still he lours and frets,
'Twixt crimson shame and anger ashy-pale:
Being red, she loves him best; and being white,
Her best is better'd with a more delight.

Look how he can, she cannot choose but love;
And by her fair immortal hand she swears,
From his soft bosom never to remove,
Till he take truce with her contending tears,
Which long have rain'd, making her cheeks all wet;
And one sweet kiss shall pay this countless debt.

Upon this promise did he raise his chin,
Like a dive-dapper peering through a wave,
Who, being look'd on, ducks as quickly in;
So offers he to give what she did crave;

71. *rank*, swollen, over-full.

86. *dive-dapper*, the little grebe, familiarly called dab-chick, found in streams all over England.

But when her lips were ready for his pay,
He winks, and turns his lips another way.

Never did passenger in summer's heat
More thirst for drink than she for this good turn
Her help she sees, but help she cannot get;
She bathes in water, yet her fire must burn:
'O, pity,' 'gan she cry, 'flint-hearted boy!
'Tis but a kiss I beg; why art thou coy?

'I have been woo'd, as I entreat thee now,
Even by the stern and direful god of war,
Whose sinewy neck in battle ne'er did bow,
Who conquers where he comes in every jar;
Yet hath he been my captive and my slave,
And begg'd for that which thou unask'd shalt have.

'Over my altars hath he hung his lance,
His batter'd shield, his uncontrolled crest,
And for my sake hath learn'd to sport and dance,
To toy, to wanton, dally, smile and jest,
Scorning his churlish drum and ensign red,
Making my arms his field, his tent my bed.

'Thus he that overruled I oversway'd,
Leading him prisoner in a red-rose chain:
Strong-tempered steel his stronger strength obey'd,
Yet was he servile to my coy disdain.
O, be not proud, nor brag not of thy might,
For mastering her that foil'd the god of fight!

'Touch but my lips with those fair lips of thine,—
Though mine be not so fair, yet are they red—
The kiss shall be thine own as well as mine:
What seest thou in the ground? hold up thy head:

100. *jar*, conflict.

Look in mine eye-balls, there thy beauty lies;
Then why not lips on lips, since eyes in eyes?

'Art thou ashamed to kiss? then wink again,
And I will wink; so shall the day seem night;
Love keeps his revels where there are but twain;
Be bold to play, our sport is not in sight:
These blue-vein'd violets whereon we lean
Never can blab, nor know not what we mean.

'The tender spring upon thy tempting lip
Shows thee unripe; yet mayst thou well be tasted:
Make use of time, let not advantage slip;
Beauty within itself should not be wasted:
Fair flowers that are not gather'd in their prime
Rot and consume themselves in little time.

'Were I hard-favour'd, foul, or wrinkled-old,
Ill-nurtured, crooked, churlish, harsh in voice,
O'erworn, despised, rheúmatic and cold,
Thick-sighted, barren, lean and lacking juice,
Then mightst thou pause, for then I were not for thee;
But having no defects, why dost abhor me?

'Thou canst not see one wrinkle in my brow;
Mine eyes are gray and bright and quick in turning;
My beauty as the spring doth yearly grow,
My flesh is soft and plump, my marrow burning;
My smooth moist hand, were it with thy hand felt,
Would in thy palm dissolve, or seem to melt.

'Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear,
Or, like a fairy, trip upon the green,

Or, like a nymph, with long dishevell'd hair,
Dance on the sands, and yet no footing seen:
Love is a spirit all compact of fire,
Not gross to sink, but light, and will aspire.

'Witness this primrose bank whereon I lie;
These forceless flowers like sturdy trees support me;
Two strengthless doves will draw me through the sky,
From morn till night, even where I list to sport me:
Is love so light, sweet boy, and may it be
That thou shouldst think it heavy unto thee?

'Is thine own heart to thine own face affected?
Can thy right hand seize love upon thy left?
Then woo thyself, be of thyself rejected,
Steal thine own freedom and complain on theft.
Narcissus so himself himself forsook,
And died to kiss his shadow in the brook.

'Torches are made to light, jewels to wear,
Dainties to taste, fresh beauty for the use,
Herbs for their smell, and sappy plants to bear;
Things growing to themselves are growth's abuse:
Seeds spring from seeds and beauty breedeth beauty;
Thou wast begot; to get it is thy duty.

'Upon the earth's increase why shouldst thou feed,
Unless the earth with thy increase be fed?
By law of nature thou art bound to breed,
That thine may live when thou thyself art dead;
And so, in spite of death, thou dost survive,
In that thy likeness still is left alive.'

149. *compact*, composed.

156. *heavy*, tedious, used in antithesis to *light*.

161. *Narcissus*, the son of Cephisus and Liriope, mistaking his own reflection in a fountain for its tutelary nymph, killed himself in his unavailing efforts to reach her.

By this the love-sick queen began to sweat,
For where they lay the shadow had forsook them,
And Titan, tired in the mid-day heat,
With burning eye did hotly overlook them,
Wishing Adonis had his team to guide,
So he were like him and by Venus' side.

And now Adonis, with a lazy spright,
And with a heavy, dark, disliking eye,
His louring brows o'erwhelming his fair sight,
Like misty vapours when they blot the sky,
Souring his cheeks cries 'Fie, no more of love!
The sun doth burn my face; I must remove.'

'Ay me,' quoth Venus, 'young, and so unkind?
What bare excuses makest thou to be gone!
I'll sigh celestial breath, whose gentle wind
Shall cool the heat of this descending sun:
I'll make a shadow for thee of my hairs;
If they burn too, I'll quench them with my tears.

'The sun that shines from heaven shines but warm,
And, lo, I lie between that sun and thee:
The heat I have from thence doth little harm,
Thine eye darts forth the fire that burneth me;
And were I not immortal, life were done
Between this heavenly and earthly sun.

'Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as steel?
Nay, more than flint, for stone at rain relenteth:
Art thou a woman's son, and canst not feel
What 'tis to love? how want of love tormenteth?
O, had thy mother borne so hard a mind,
She had not brought forth thee, but died unkind.

177. *Titan.* Hyperion, one of the Titans, drove the chariot of the sun.
181. *spright*, spirit.

'What am I, that thou shouldst contemn me this?
Or what great danger dwells upon my suit?
What were thy lips the worse for one poor kiss?
Speak, fair; but speak fair words, or else be mute:
Give me one kiss, I'll give it thee again,
And one for interest, if thou wilt have twain.

'Fie, lifeless picture, cold and senseless stone,
Well-painted idol, image dull and dead,
Statue contenting but the eye alone,
Thing like a man, but of no woman bred!
Thou art no man, though of a man's complexion,
For men will kiss even by their own direction.'

This said, impatience chokes her pleading tongue,
And swelling passion doth provoke a pause;
Red cheeks and fiery eyes blaze forth her wrong;
Being judge in love, she cannot right her cause:
And now she weeps, and now she fain would speak,
And now her sobs do her intendments break.

Sometimes she shakes her head and then his hand,
Now gazeth she on him, now on the ground;
Sometimes her arms infold him like a band:
She would, he will not in her arms be bound;
And when from thence he struggles to be gone,
She locks her lily fingers one in one.

'Fondling,' she saith, 'since I have hemm'd thee here
Within the circuit of this ivory pale,
I'll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer;
Feed where thou wilt, on mountain or in dale:
Graze on my lips; and if those hills be dry,
Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie.

'Within this limit is relief enough,
Sweet bottom-grass and high delightful plain,
Round rising hillocks, brakes obscure and rough,
To shelter thee from tempest and from rain:
Then be my deer, since I am such a park;
No dog shall rouse thee, though a thousand bark.'

At this Adonis smiles as in disdain,
That in each cheek appears a pretty dimple:
Love made those hollows, if himself were slain,
He might be buried in a tomb so simple;
Foreknowing well, if there he came to lie,
Why, there Love lived, and there he could not die.

These lovely caves, these round enchanting pits,
Open'd their mouths to swallow Venus' liking.
Being mad before, how doth she now for wits?
Struck dead at first, what needs a second striking?
Poor queen of love, in thine own law forlorn,
To love a cheek that smiles at thee in scorn!

Now which way shall she turn? what shall she say?
Her words are done, her woes the more increasing;
The time is spent, her object will away,
And from her twining arms doth urge releasing.
'Pity,' she cries, 'some favour, some remorse!'
Away he springs, and hasteth to his horse.

But, lo, from forth a copse that neighbours by,
A breeding jennet, lusty, young and proud,
Adonis' trampling courser doth espy,
And forth she rushes, snorts and neighs aloud:
The strong-neck'd steed, being tied unto a tree,
Breaketh his rein, and to her straight goes he.

236. *bottom-grass*, the lush grass which grows in a rich valley.

260. *jennet*, a small Spanish horse.

Imperiously he leaps, he neighs, he bounds,
And now his woven girths he breaks asunder;
The bearing earth with his hard hoof he wounds,
Whose hollow womb resounds like heaven's thunder;
The iron bit he crusheth 'tween his teeth,
Controlling what he was controlled with.

His ears up-prick'd; his braided hanging mane
Upon his compass'd crest now stand on end;
His nostrils drink the air, and forth again,
As from a furnace, vapours doth he send:
His eye, which scornfully glisters like fire,
Shows his hot courage and his high desire.

Sometime he trots, as if he told the steps,
With gentle majesty and modest pride;
Anon he rears upright, curvets and leaps,
As who should say 'Lo, thus my strength is tried,
And this I do to captivate the eye
Of the fair breeder that is standing by.'

What recketh he his rider's angry stir,
His flattering 'Holla,' or his 'Stand, I say'?
What cares he now for curb or pricking spur?
For rich caparisons or trapping gay?
He sees his love, and nothing else he sees,
For nothing else with his proud sight agrees.

Look, when a painter would surpass the life,
In limning out a well-proportion'd steed,
His art with nature's workmanship at strife,
As if the dead the living should exceed;
So did this horse excel a common one
In shape, in courage, colour, pace and bone.

272. *compass'd*, arched, like an arc of a circle.
279. *curvets*, prances.
284. '*Holla*,' hold! enough! (a less peremptory phrase than 'Stand!').

Round-hoof'd, short-jointed, fetlocks shag and long,
Broad breast, full eye, small head and nostril wide,
High crest, short ears, straight legs and passing strong,
Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide:
Look, what a horse should have he did not lack,
Save a proud rider on so proud a back.

Sometime he scuds far off and there he stares;
Anon he starts at stirring of a feather;
To bid the wind a base he now prepares,
And whether he run or fly they know not whether;
For through his mane and tail the high wind sings,
Fanning the hairs, who wave like feather'd wings.

He looks upon his love and neighs unto her;
She answers him as if she knew his mind:
Being proud, as females are, to see him woo her,
She puts on outward strangeness, seems unkind,
Spurns at his love and scorns the heat he feels,
Beating his kind embracements with her heels.

Then, like a melancholy malcontent,
He vails his tail that, like a falling plume,
Cool shadow to his melting buttock lent:
He stamps and bites the poor flies in his fume.
His love, perceiving how he is enraged,
Grew kinder, and his fury was assuaged.

His testy master goeth about to take him;
When, lo, the unback'd breeder, full of fear,
Jealous of catching, swiftly doth forsake him,
With her the horse, and left Adonis there:

303. *bid the wind a base*, challenged the wind to a race. The 'base' or 'prisoner's' base was a country game, in which the fastest runner won.

314. *vails*, lowers.

As they were mad, unto the wood they hie them,
Out-stripping crows that strive to over-fly them.

All swoln with chafing, down Adonis sits,
Banning his boisterous and unruly beast:
And now the happy season once more fits,
That love-sick Love by pleading may be blest;
For lovers say, the heart hath treble wrong
When it is barr'd the aidance of the tongue.

An oven that is stopp'd or river stay'd,
Burneth more hotly, swelleth with more rage:
So of concealed sorrow may be said;
Free vent of words love's fire doth assuage;
But when the heart's attorney once is mute,
The client breaks, as desperate in his suit.

He sees her coming, and begins to glow,
Even as a dying coal revives with wind,
And with his bonnet hides his angry brow;
Looks on the dull earth with disturbed mind,
Taking no notice that she is so nigh,
For all askance he holds her in his eye.

O, what a sight it was, wistly to view
How she came stealing to the wayward boy!
To note the fighting conflict of her hue,
How white and red each other did destroy!
But now her cheek was pale, and by and by
It flash'd forth fire, as lightning from the sky.

Now was she just before him as he sat,
And like a lowly lover down she kneels;
With one fair hand she heaveth up his hat,
Her other tender hand his fair cheek feels:

326. *Banning*, cursing. 343. *wistly*, attentively.

His tenderer cheek receives her soft hand's print,
As apt as new-fall'n snow takes any dint.

O, what a war of looks was then between them!
Her eyes petitioners to his eyes suing;
His eyes saw her eyes as they had not seen them;
Her eyes woo'd still, his eyes disdain'd the wooing:
And all this dumb play had his acts made plain
With tears, which, chorus-like, her eyes did rain.

Full gently now she takes him by the hand,
A lily prison'd in a gaol of snow,
Or ivory in an alabaster band;
So white a friend engirts so white a foe:
This beauteous combat, wilful and unwilling,
Show'd like two silver doves that sit a-billing.

Once more the engine of her thoughts began:
'O fairest mover on this mortal round,
Would thou wert as I am, and I a man,
My heart all whole as thine, thy heart my wound;
For one sweet look thy help I would assure thee,
Though nothing but my body's bane would cure thee.'

'Give me my hand,' saith he, 'why dost thou feel it?'
'Give me my heart,' saith she, 'and thou shalt have it;
O, give it me, lest thy hard heart do steel it,
And being steel'd, soft sighs can never grave it:
Then love's deep groans I never shall regard,
Because Adonis' heart hath made mine hard.'

367. *engine*, instrument.

'For shame,' he cries, 'let go, and let me go;
My day's delight is past, my horse is gone,
And 'tis your fault I am bereft him so:
I pray you hence, and leave me here alone;
For all my mind, my thought, my busy care,
Is how to get my palfrey from the mare.

Thus she replies: 'Thy palfrey, as he should,
Welcomes the warm approach of sweet desire:
Affection is a coal that must be cool'd;
Else, suffer'd, it will set the heart on fire:
The sea hath bounds, but deep desire hath none;
Therefore no marvel though thy horse be gone.

'How like a jade he stood, tied to the tree,
Servilely master'd with a leathern rein!
But when he saw his love, his youth's fair fee,
He held such petty bondage in disdain;
Throwing the base thong from his bending crest,
Enfranchising his mouth, his back, his breast.

'Who sees his true-love in her naked bed,
Teaching the sheets a whiter hue than white,
But, when his glutton eye so full hath fed,
His other agents aim at like delight?
Who is so faint, that dare not be so bold
To touch the fire, the weather being cold?

'Let me excuse thy courser, gentle boy;
And learn of him, I heartily beseech thee,
To take advantage on presented joy;
Though I were dumb, yet his proceedings teach thee:
O, learn to love; the lesson is but plain,
And once made perfect, never lost again.'

'I know not love,' quoth he, 'nor will not know it,
Unless it be a boar, and then I chase it;
'Tis much to borrow, and I will not owe it;
My love to love is love but to disgrace it;
For I have heard it is a life in death,
That laughs and weeps, and all but with a breath.

'Who wears a garment shapeless and unfinish'd?
Who plucks the bud before one leaf put forth?
If springing things be any jot diminish'd,
They wither in their prime, prove nothing worth:
The colt that 's back'd and burden'd being young
Loseth his pride and never waxeth strong.

'You hurt my hand with wringing; let us part,
And leave this idle theme, this bootless chat:
Remove your siege from my unyielding heart;
To love's alarms it will not ope the gate:
Dismiss your vows, your feigned tears, your flattery;
For where a heart is hard they make no battery.'

'What! canst thou talk?' quoth she, 'hast thou a tongue?
O, would thou hadst not, or I had no hearing!
Thy mermaid's voice hath done me double wrong;
I had my load before, now press'd with bearing:
Melodious discord, heavenly tune harsh-sounding,
Ear's deep-sweet music, and heart's deep-sore wounding.

'Had I no eyes but ears, my ears would love
That inward beauty and invisible;
Or were I deaf, thy outward parts would move
Each part in me that were but sensible:
Though neither eyes nor ears, to hear nor see,
Yet should I be in love by touching thee.

'Say, that the sense of feeling were bereft me,
And that I could not see, nor hear, nor touch,
And nothing but the very smell were left me,
Yet would my love to thee be still as much;
For from the stillitory of thy face excelling
Comes breath perfumed that breedeth love by smelling.

'But, O, what banquet wert thou to the taste,
Being nurse and feeder of the other four!
Would they not wish the feast might ever last,
And bid Suspicion double-lock the door,
Lest Jealousy, that sour unwelcome guest,
Should, by his stealing in, disturb the feast?'

Once more the ruby-colour'd portal open'd,
Which to his speech did honey passage yield;
Like a red morn, that ever yet betoken'd
Wreck to the seaman, tempest to the field,
Sorrow to shepherds, woe unto the birds,
Gusts and foul flaws to herdmen and to herds.

This ill presage advisedly she marketh:
Even as the wind is hush'd before it raineth,
Or as the wolf doth grin before he barketh,
Or as the berry breaks before it staineth,
Or like the deadly bullet of a gun,
His meaning struck her ere his words begun.

And at his look she flatly falleth down,
For looks kill love and love by looks reviveth:
A smile recures the wounding of a frown;
But blessed bankrupt, that by love so thriveth!
The silly boy, believing she is dead,
Claps her pale cheek, till clapping makes it red;

443. *stillitory*, a still. 456. *flaws*, sudden blasts of wind.

And all amazed brake off his late intent,
For sharply he did think to reprehend her,
Which cunning love did wittily prevent:
Fair fall the wit that can so well defend her!
For on the grass she lies as she were slain,
Till his breath breatheth life in her again.

He wrings her nose, he strikes her on the cheeks,
He bends her fingers, holds her pulses hard,
He chafes her lips; a thousand ways he seeks
To mend the hurt that his unkindness marr'd:
He kisses her; and she, by her good will,
Will never rise, so he will kiss her still.

The night of sorrow now is turn'd to day:
Her two blue windows faintly she upheaveth,
Like the fair sun, when in his fresh array
He cheers the morn and all the earth relieveth:
And as the bright sun glorifies the sky,
So is her face illumined with her eye;

Whose beams upon his hairless face are fix'd,
As if from thence they borrow'd all their shine.
Were never four such lamps together mix'd,
Had not his clouded with his brow's repine;
But hers, which through the crystal tears gave
light,
Shone like the moon in water seen by night.

'O, where am I?' quoth she; 'in earth or heaven,
Or in the ocean drench'd, or in the fire?
What hour is this? or morn or weary even?
Do I delight to die, or life desire?
But now I lived, and life was death's annoy;
But now I died, and death was lively joy.

'O, thou didst kill me: kill me once again
Thy eyes' shrewd tutor, that hard heart of thine,
Hath taught them scornful tricks and such disdain
That they have murder'd this poor heart of mine;
And these mine eyes, true leaders to their queen,
But for thy piteous lips no more had seen.

'Long may they kiss each other, for this cure!
O, never let their crimson liveries wear!
And as they last, their verdure still endure,
To drive infection from the dangerous year!
That the star-gazers, having writ on death,
May say, the plague is banish'd by thy breath.

'Pure lips, sweet seals in my soft lips imprinted,
What bargains may I make, still to be sealing?
To sell myself I can be well contented,
So thou wilt buy and pay and use good dealing;
Which purchase if thou make, for fear of slips
Set thy seal-manual on my wax-red lips.

'A thousand kisses buys my heart from me;
And pay them at thy leisure, one by one.
What is ten hundred touches unto thee?
Are they not quickly told and quickly gone?
Say, for non-payment that the debt should double,
Is twenty hundred kisses such a trouble?'

'Fair queen,' quoth he, 'if any love you owe me,
Measure my strangeness with my unripe years:
Before I know myself, seek not to know me;
No fisher but the ungrown fry forbears:
The mellow plum doth fall, the green sticks fast,
Or being early pluck'd is sour to taste.

'Look, the world's comforter, with weary gait,
His day's hot task hath ended in the west;
The owl, night's herald, shrieks, "'Tis very late;"
The sheep are gone to fold, birds to their nest,
And coal-black clouds that shadow heaven's light
Do summon us to part and bid good night.

'Now let me say "Good night," and so say you;
If you will say so, you shall have a kiss.'
'Good night,' quoth she, and, ere he says 'Adieu,'
The honey fee of parting tender'd is:
Her arms do lend his neck a sweet embrace;
Incorporate then they seem; face grows to face.

Till, breathless, he disjoin'd, and backward drew
The heavenly moisture, that sweet coral mouth,
Whose precious taste her thirsty lips well knew,
Whereon they surfeit, yet complain on drouth:
He with her plenty press'd, she faint with dearth,
Their lips together glued, fall to the earth.

Now quick desire hath caught the yielding prey,
And glutton-like she feeds, yet never filleth;
Her lips are conquerors, his lips obey,
Paying what ransom the insulter willeth;
Whose vulture thought doth pitch the price so high,
That she will draw his lips' rich treasure dry:

And having felt the sweetness of the spoil,
With blindfold fury she begins to forage;
Her face doth reek and smoke, her blood doth boil,
And careless lust stirs up a desperate courage,
Planting oblivion, beating reason back,
Forgetting shame's pure blush and honour's wrack.

Hot, faint, and weary, with her hard embracing,
Like a wild bird being tamed with too much handling,
Or as the fleet-foot roe that 's tired with chasing,
Or like the froward infant still'd with dandling,
He now obeys, and now no more resisteth,
While she takes all she can, not all she listeth.

What wax so frozen but dissolves with tempering,
And yields at last to every light impression?
Things out of hope are compass'd oft with venturing,
Chiefly in love, whose leave exceeds commission:
Affection faints not like a pale-faced coward,
But then woos best when most his choice is froward.

When he did frown, O, had she then gave over,
Such nectar from his lips she had not suck'd.
Foul words and frowns must not repel a lover;
What though the rose have prickles, yet 'tis pluck'd:
Were beauty under twenty locks kept fast,
Yet love breaks through and picks them all at last.

For pity now she can no more detain him;
The poor fool prays her that he may depart:
She is resolved no longer to restrain him;
Bids him farewell, and look well to her heart,
The which, by Cupid's bow she doth protest,
He carries thence incaged in his breast.

'Sweet boy,' she says, 'this night I 'll waste in sorrow,
For my sick heart commands mine eyes to watch.
Tell me, Love's master, shall we meet to-morrow?
Say, shall we? shall we? wilt thou make the match?'

568. *commission*, warrant.

He tells her, no; to-morrow he intends
To hunt the boar with certain of his friends.

'The boar!' quoth she; whereat a sudden pale,
Like lawn being spread upon the blushing rose,
Usurps her cheek; she trembles at his tale,
And on his neck her yoking arms she throws:
She sinketh down, still hanging by his neck,
He on her belly falls, she on her back.

Now is she in the very lists of love,
Her champion mounted for the hot encounter:
All is imaginary she doth prove,
He will not manage her, although he mount her;
That worse than Tantalus' is her annoy,
To clip Elysium and to lack her joy.

Even as poor birds, deceived with painted grapes,
Do surfeit by the eye and pine the maw,
Even so she languisheth in her mishaps
As those poor birds that helpless berries saw.
The warm effects which she in him finds missing
She seeks to kindle with continual kissing.

But all in vain; good queen, it will not be:
She hath assay'd as much as may be proved;
Her pleading hath deserved a greater fee;
She 's Love, she loves, and yet she is not loved.
'Fie, fie,' he says, 'you crush me; let me go;
You have no reason to withhold me so.'

'Thou hadst been gone,' quoth she, 'sweet boy, ere this,
But that thou told'st me thou wouldst hunt the boar.
O, be advised: thou know'st not what it is
With javelin's point a churlish swine to gore,

597. *prove*, experience. 600. *clip*, embrace.

Whose tushes never sheathed he whetteth still,
Like to a mortal butcher bent to kill.

'On his bow-back he hath a battle set
Of bristly pikes, that ever threat his foes;
His eyes, like glow-worms, shine when he doth fret·
His snout digs sepulchres where'er he goes;
Being moved, he strikes whate'er is in his way,
And whom he strikes his crooked tushes slay.

'His brawny sides, with hairy bristles arm'd,
Are better proof than thy spear's point can enter;
His short thick neck cannot be easily harm'd;
Being ireful, on the lion he will venture:
The thorny brambles and embracing bushes,
As fearful of him, part, through whom he rushes.

'Alas, he nought esteems that face of thine,
To which Love's eyes pay tributary gazes;
Nor thy soft hands, sweet lips and crystal eyne,
Whose full perfection all the world amazes;
But having thee at vantage,—wondrous dread!—
Would root these beauties as he roots the mead.

'O, let him keep his loathsome cabin still;
Beauty hath nought to do with such foul fiends:
Come not within his danger by thy will;
They that thrive well take counsel of their friends.
When thou didst name the boar, not to dissemble,
I fear'd thy fortune, and my joints did tremble.

'Didst thou not mark my face? was it not white?
Saw'st thou not signs of fear lurk in mine eye?
Grew I not faint? and fell I not downright?
Within my bosom, whereon thou dost lie,

619. *battle*, phalanx. 624. *tushes*, tusks.

My boding heart pants, beats, and takes no rest,
But, like an earthquake, shakes thee on my breast.

'For where Love reigns, disturbing Jealousy
Doth call himself Affection's sentinel;
Gives false alarms, suggesteth mutiny,
And in a peaceful hour doth cry "Kill, kill!"
Distempering gentle Love in his desire,
As air and water do abate the fire.

'This sour informer, this bate-breeding spy,
This canker that eats up Love's tender spring,
This carry-tale, dissentious Jealousy,
That sometime true news, sometime false doth bring,
Knocks at my heart and whispers in mine ear
That if I love thee, I thy death should fear:

'And more than so, presenteth to mine eye
The picture of an angry-chafing boar,
Under whose sharp fangs on his back doth lie
An image like thyself, all stain'd with gore;
Whose blood upon the fresh flowers being shed
Doth make them droop with grief and hang the head.

'What should I do, seeing thee so indeed,
That tremble at the imagination?
The thought of it doth make my faint heart bleed,
And fear doth teach it divination:
I prophesy thy death, my living sorrow,
If thou encounter with the boar to-morrow.

655. *bate*, contention.

'But if thou needs wilt hunt, be ruled by me;
Uncouple at the timorous flying hare,
Or at the fox which lives by subtlety,
Or at the roe which no encounter dare:
Pursue these fearful creatures o'er the downs,
And on thy well-breath'd horse keep with thy hounds.

'And when thou hast on foot the purblind hare,
Mark the poor wretch, to overshoot his troubles
How he outruns the wind, and with what care
He cranks and crosses with a thousand doubles:
The many musets through the which he goes
Are like a labyrinth to amaze his foes.

'Sometime he runs among a flock of sheep,
To make the cunning hounds mistake their smell,
And sometime where earth-delving conies keep,
To stop the loud pursuers in their yell,
And sometime sorteth with a herd of deer:
Danger deviseth shifts; wit waits on fear:

'For there his smell with others being mingled,
The hot scent-snuffing hounds are driven to doubt,
Ceasing their clamorous cry till they have singled
With much ado the cold fault cleanly out;
Then do they spend their mouths: Echo replies,
As if another chase were in the skies.

'By this, poor Wat, far off upon a hill,
Stands on his hinder legs with listening ear,
To hearken if his foes pursue him still:
Anon their loud alarums he doth hear;

682. *cranks*, winds.
683. *musets*, the gaps in thickets or fences through which the hare or other animal is accustomed to pass.
684. *amaze*, bewilder.

And now his grief may be compared well
To one sore sick that hears the passing-bell.

'Then shalt thou see the dew-bedabbled wretch
Turn, and return, indenting with the way;
Each envious brier his weary legs doth scratch,
Each shadow makes him stop, each murmur stay:
For misery is trodden on by many,
And being low never relieved by any.

'Lie quietly, and hear a little more;
Nay, do not struggle, for thou shalt not rise:
To make thee hate the hunting of the boar,
Unlike myself thou hear'st me moralize,
Applying this to that, and so to so;
For love can comment upon every woe.

'Where did I leave?' 'No matter where;' quoth he,
'Leave me, and then the story aptly ends:
The night is spent.' 'Why, what of that?' quoth she.
'I am,' quoth he, 'expected of my friends;
And now 'tis dark, and going I shall fall.'
'In night,' quoth she, 'desire sees best of all.

'But if thou fall, O, then imagine this,
The earth, in love with thee, thy footing trips,
And all is but to rob thee of a kiss.
Rich preys make true men thieves; so do thy lips
Make modest Dian cloudy and forlorn,
Lest she should steal a kiss and die forsworn.

'Now of this dark night I perceive the reason:
Cynthia for shame obscures her silver shine,
Till forging Nature be condemn'd of treason,
For stealing moulds from heaven that were divine;
Wherein she framed thee in high heaven's despite,
To shame the sun by day and her by night.

'And therefore hath she bribed the Destinies
To cross the curious workmanship of nature,
To mingle beauty with infirmities
And pure perfection with impure defeature;
Making it subject to the tyranny
Of mad mischances and much misery;

'As burning fevers, agues pale and faint,
Life-poisoning pestilence and frenzies wood,
The marrow-eating sickness, whose attaint
Disorder breeds by heating of the blood:
Surfeits, imposthumes, grief, and damn'd despair,
Swear Nature's death for framing thee so fair.

'And not the least of all these maladies
But in one minute's fight brings beauty under:
Both favour, savour, hue and qualities,
Whereat the impartial gazer late did wonder,
Are on the sudden wasted, thaw'd and done,
As mountain-snow melts with the midday sun.

'Therefore, despite of fruitless chastity,
Love-lacking vestals and self-loving nuns,
That on the earth would breed a scarcity
And barren dearth of daughters and of sons,
Be prodigal: the lamp that burns by night
Dries up his oil to lend the world his light.

'What is thy body but a swallowing grave,
Seeming to bury that posterity
Which by the rights of time thou needs must have,
If thou destroy them not in dark obscurity?
If so, the world will hold thee in disdain,
Sith in thy pride so fair a hope is slain.

736. *defeature*, disfigurement. 740. *wood*, mad.

'So in thyself thyself art made away;
A mischief worse than civil home-bred strife,
Or theirs whose desperate hands themselves do slay,
Or butcher-sire that reaves his son of life.
Foul-cankering rust the hidden treasure frets,
But gold that 's put to use more gold begets.'

'Nay, then,' quoth Adon, 'you will fall again
Into your idle over-handled theme:
The kiss I gave you is bestow'd in vain,
And all in vain you strive against the stream;
For, by this black-faced night, desire's foul nurse,
Your treatise makes me like you worse and worse.

'If love have lent you twenty thousand tongues,
And every tongue more moving than your own,
Bewitching like the wanton mermaid's songs,
Yet from mine ear the tempting tune is blown;
For know, my heart stands armed in mine ear,
And will not let a false sound enter there;

'Lest the deceiving harmony should run
Into the quiet closure of my breast;
And then my little heart were quite undone,
In his bedchamber to be barr'd of rest.
No, lady, no; my heart longs not to groan,
But soundly sleeps, while now it sleeps alone.

'What have you urged that I cannot reprove?
The path is smooth that leadeth on to danger:
I hate not love, but your device in love,
That lends embracements unto every stranger.
You do it for increase: O strange excuse,
When reason is the bawd to lust's abuse!

766. *reaves*, A.S. 'reofan,' to deprive; represented in mod. English by the past part. *reft* and its compound *bereave*.
767. *frets*, eats away; vide *Ant. and Cleo.* iv. 12. 8.
774. *treatise*, talk.
787. *reprove*, refute.

'Call it not love, for Love to heaven is fled,
Since sweating Lust on earth usurp'd his name;
Under whose simple semblance he hath fed
Upon fresh beauty, blotting it with blame;
Which the hot tyrant stains and soon bereaves,
As caterpillars do the tender leaves.

'Love comforteth like sunshine after rain,
But Lust's effect is tempest after sun;
Love's gentle spring doth always fresh remain,
Lust's winter comes ere summer half be done;
Love surfeits not, Lust like a glutton dies;
Love is all truth, Lust full of forged lies.

'More I could tell, but more I dare not say;
The text is old, the orator too green.
Therefore, in sadness, now I will away;
My face is full of shame, my heart of teen:
Mine ears, that to your wanton talk attended,
Do burn themselves for having so offended.'

With this, he breaketh from the sweet embrace
Of those fair arms which bound him to her breast,
And homeward through the dark laund runs apace;
Leaves Love upon her back deeply distress'd.
Look, how a bright star shooteth from the sky,
So glides he in the night from Venus' eye;

Which after him she darts, as one on shore
Gazing upon a late-embarked friend,
Till the wild waves will have him seen no more,
Whose ridges with the meeting clouds contend:
So did the merciless and pitchy night
Fold in the object that did feed her sight.

797. *bereaves*, impairs.
808. *teen*, sorrow, vexation.
813. *laund*, a wild uncultivated plain.

Whereat amazed, as one that unaware
Hath dropp'd a precious jewel in the flood,
Or stonish'd as night-wanderers often are,
Their light blown out in some mistrustful wood;
Even so confounded in the dark she lay,
Having lost the fair discovery of her way.

And now she beats her heart, whereat it groans,
That all the neighbour caves, as seeming troubled,
Make verbal repetition of her moans;
Passion on passion deeply is redoubled:
'Ay me!' she cries, and twenty times 'Woe, woe!'
And twenty echoes twenty times cry so.

She marking them begins a wailing note
And sings extemporally a woeful ditty;
How love makes young men thrall, and old men dote;
How love is wise in folly, foolish-witty:
Her heavy anthem still concludes in woe,
And still the choir of echoes answer so.

Her song was tedious and outwore the night,
For lovers' hours are long, though seeming short:
If pleased themselves, others, they think, delight
In such-like circumstance, with such-like sport:
Their copious stories oftentimes begun
End without audience and are never done.

For who hath she to spend the night withal
But idle sounds resembling parasites,
Like shrill-tongued tapsters answering every call,
Soothing the humour of fantastic wits?
She says 'Tis so:' they answer all 'Tis so;'
And would say after her, if she said 'No.'

Lo, here the gentle lark, weary of rest,
From his moist cabinet mounts up on high,

837. *thrall*, enslaved. 854. *cabinet*, little cabin.

And wakes the morning, from whose silver breast
The sun ariseth in his majesty;
  Who doth the world so gloriously behold
  That cedar-tops and hills seem burnish'd gold.

Venus salutes him with this fair good-morrow:
'O thou clear god, and patron of all light,
From whom each lamp and shining star doth borrow
The beauteous influence that makes him bright,
  There lives a son that suck'd an earthly mother,
  May lend thee light, as thou dost lend to other.'

This said, she hasteth to a myrtle grove,
Musing the morning is so much o'erworn,
And yet she hears no tidings of her love:
She hearkens for his hounds and for his horn:
  Anon she hears them chant it lustily,
  And all in haste she coasteth to the cry.

And as she runs, the bushes in the way
Some catch her by the neck, some kiss her face,
Some twine about her thigh to make her stay:
She wildly breaketh from their strict embrace,
  Like a milch doe, whose swelling dugs do ache,
  Hasting to feed her fawn hid in some brake.

By this, she hears the hounds are at a bay;
Whereat she starts, like one that spies an adder
Wreathed up in fatal folds just in his way,
The fear whereof doth make him shake and shudder;
  Even so the timorous yelping of the hounds
  Appals her senses and her spirit confounds.

870. *coasteth*, skirts the thickets (L.), (properly said of a ship creeping along the shore).

877. *are at a bay*, said of the hounds when the quarry turned to face them; the phrase 'at bay' being reserved for the quarry itself.

For now she knows it is no gentle chase,
But the blunt boar, rough bear, or lion proud,
Because the cry remaineth in one place,
Where fearfully the dogs exclaim aloud:
Finding their enemy to be so curst,
They all strain courtesy who shall cope him first.

This dismal cry rings sadly in her ear,
Through which it enters to surprise her heart;
Who, overcome by doubt and bloodless fear,
With cold-pale weakness numbs each feeling part:
Like soldiers, when their captain once doth yield,
They basely fly and dare not stay the field.

Thus stands she in a trembling ecstasy;
Till, cheering up her senses all dismay'd,
She tells them 'tis a causeless fantasy,
And childish error, that they are afraid;
Bids them leave quaking, bids them fear no more:
And with that word she spied the hunted boar,

Whose frothy mouth, bepainted all with red,
Like milk and blood being mingled both together,
A second fear through all her sinews spread,
Which madly hurries her she knows not whither:
This way she runs, and now she will no further,
But back retires to rate the boar for murther.

A thousand spleens bear her a thousand ways;
She treads the path that she untreads again;
Her more than haste is mated with delays,
Like the proceedings of a drunken brain,
Full of respects, yet nought at all respecting;
In hand with all things, nought at all effecting.

909. *mated*, checkmated, disabled.
911. *respects*, considerations.

Here kennell'd in a brake she finds a hound,
And asks the weary caitiff for his master,
And there another licking of his wound,
'Gainst venom'd sores the only sovereign plaster;
And here she meets another sadly scowling,
To whom she speaks, and he replies with howling.

When he hath ceased his ill-resounding noise,
Another flap-mouth'd mourner, black and grim,
Against the welkin volleys out his voice;
Another and another answer him,
Clapping their proud tails to the ground below,
Shaking their scratch'd ears, bleeding as they go.

Look, how the world's poor people are amazed
At apparitions, signs and prodigies,
Whereon with fearful eyes they long have gazed,
Infusing them with dreadful prophecies;
So she at these sad signs draws up her breath
And, sighing it again, exclaims on Death.

'Hard-favour'd tyrant, ugly, meagre, lean,
Hateful divorce of love,'—thus chides she Death,—
'Grim-grinning ghost, earth's worm, what dost thou mean
To stifle beauty and to steal his breath,
Who when he lived, his breath and beauty set
Gloss on the rose, smell to the violet?

'If he be dead,—O no, it cannot be,
Seeing his beauty, thou shouldst strike at it;—
O yes, it may; thou hast no eyes to see,
But hatefully at random dost thou hit.
Thy mark is feeble age, but thy false dart
Mistakes that aim and cleaves an infant's heart.

'Hadst thou but bid beware, then he had spoke,
And, hearing him, thy power had lost his power.
The Destinies will curse thee for this stroke;
They bid thee crop a weed, thou pluck'st a flower:
Love's golden arrow at him should have fled,
And not Death's ebon dart, to strike him dead.

'Dost thou drink tears, that thou provokest such weeping?
What may a heavy groan advantage thee?
Why hast thou cast into eternal sleeping
Those eyes that taught all other eyes to see?
Now Nature cares not for thy mortal vigour,
Since her best work is ruin'd with thy rigour.'

Here overcome, as one full of despair,
She vail'd her eyelids, who, like sluices, stopt
The crystal tide that from her two cheeks fair
In the sweet channel of her bosom dropt;
But through the flood-gates breaks the silver rain,
And with his strong course opens them again.

O, how her eyes and tears did lend and borrow!
Her eyes seen in the tears, tears in her eye;
Both crystals, where they view'd each other's sorrow,
Sorrow that friendly sighs sought still to dry;
But like a stormy day, now wind, now rain,
Sighs dry her cheeks, tears make them wet again.

Variable passions throng her constant woe,
As striving who should best become her grief;
All entertain'd, each passion labours so
That every present sorrow seemeth chief,
But none is best: then join they all together,
Like many clouds consulting for foul weather.

956. *vail'd*, lowered.

By this, far off she hears some huntsman hollo;
A nurse's song ne'er pleased her babe so well:
The dire imagination she did follow
This sound of hope doth labour to expel;
For now reviving joy bids her rejoice,
And flatters her it is Adonis' voice.

Whereat her tears began to turn their tide,
Being prison'd in her eye like pearls in glass:
Yet sometimes falls an orient drop beside,
Which her cheek melts, as scorning it should pass
To wash the foul face of the sluttish ground,
Who is but drunken when she seemeth drown'd.

O hard-believing love, how strange it seems
Not to believe, and yet too credulous!
Thy weal and woe are both of them extremes;
Despair and hope makes thee ridiculous:
The one doth flatter thee in thoughts unlikely,
In likely thoughts the other kills thee quickly.

Now she unweaves the web that she hath wrought;
Adonis lives, and Death is not to blame;
It was not she that call'd him all-to naught:
Now she adds honours to his hateful name;
She clepes him king of graves, and grave for kings,
Imperious supreme of all mortal things.

'No, no,' quoth she, 'sweet Death, I did but jest;
Yet pardon me, I felt a kind of fear
When as I met the boar, that bloody beast,
Which knows no pity, but is still severe;
Then, gentle shadow,—truth I must confess,—
I rail'd on thee, fearing my love's decease.

981. *orient*, pearl-like.

988. *makes*. The singular is accurate; for it is the rapid interchange of despair and hope, not their separate actions, which produces this effect.

995. *clepes*, calls.

'Tis not my fault: the boar provoked my tongue;
Be wreak'd on him, invisible commander;
'Tis he, foul creature, that hath done thee wrong;
I did but act, he 's author of thy slander:
Grief hath two tongues, and never woman yet
Could rule them both without ten women's wit.'

Thus hoping that Adonis is alive,
Her rash suspect she doth extenuate;
And that his beauty may the better thrive,
With Death she humbly doth insinuate;
Tells him of trophies, statues, tombs, and stories,
His victories, his triumphs and his glories.

'O Jove,' quoth she, 'how much a fool was I
To be of such a weak and silly mind
To wail his death who lives and must not die
Till mutual overthrow of mortal kind!
For he being dead, with him is beauty slain,
And, beauty dead, black chaos comes again.

'Fie, fie, fond love, thou art so full of fear
As one with treasure laden, hemm'd with thieves;
Trifles, unwitnessed with eye or ear,
Thy coward heart with false bethinking grieves.'
Even at this word she hears a merry horn,
Whereat she leaps that was but late forlorn.

As falcon to the lure, away she flies;
The grass stoops not, she treads on it so light;
And in her haste unfortunately spies
The foul boar's conquest on her fair delight;
Which seen, her eyes, as murder'd with the view,
Like stars ashamed of day, themselves withdrew;

1010. *suspect*, suspicion.

Or, as the snail, whose tender horns being hit,
Shrinks backward in his shelly cave with pain,
And there, all smother'd up, in shade doth sit,
Long after fearing to creep forth again;
So, at his bloody view, her eyes are fled
Into the deep dark cabins of her head:

Where they resign their office and their light
To the disposing of her troubled brain;
Who bids them still consort with ugly night,
And never wound the heart with looks again;
Who, like a king perplexed in his throne,
By their suggestion gives a deadly groan,

Whereat each tributary subject quakes;
As when the wind, imprison'd in the ground,
Struggling for passage, earth's foundation shakes,
Which with cold terror doth men's minds confound.
This mutiny each part doth so surprise
That from their dark beds once more leap her eyes;

And, being open'd, threw unwilling light
Upon the wide wound that the boar had trench'd
In his soft flank; whose wonted lily white
With purple tears, that his wound wept, was drench'd:
No flower was nigh, no grass, herb, leaf, or weed,
But stole his blood and seem'd with him to bleed.

This solemn sympathy poor Venus noteth;
Over one shoulder doth she hang her head;
Dumbly she passions, franticly she doteth;
She thinks he could not die, he is not dead:
Her voice is stopt, her joints forget to bow;
Her eyes are mad that they have wept till now.

Upon his hurt she looks so steadfastly
That her sight dazzling makes the wound seem three;
And then she reprehends her mangling eye,
That makes more gashes where no breach should be:
His face seems twain, each several limb is doubled;
For oft the eye mistakes, the brain being troubled.

'My tongue cannot express my grief for one,
And yet,' quoth she, 'behold two Adons dead!
My sighs are blown away, my salt tears gone,
Mine eyes are turn'd to fire, my heart to lead:
Heavy heart's lead, melt at mine eyes' red fire!
So shall I die by drops of hot desire.

'Alas, poor world, what treasure hast thou lost!
What face remains alive that 's worth the viewing?
Whose tongue is music now? what canst thou boast
Of things long since, or any thing ensuing?
The flowers are sweet, their colours fresh and trim;
But true-sweet beauty lived and died with him.

'Bonnet nor veil henceforth no creature wear!
Nor sun nor wind will ever strive to kiss you:
Having no fair to lose, you need not fear;
The sun doth scorn you and the wind doth hiss you:
But when Adonis lived, sun and sharp air
Lurk'd like two thieves, to rob him of his fair.

'And therefore would he put his bonnet on,
Under whose brim the gaudy sun would peep;
The wind would blow it off and, being gone,
Play with his locks: then would Adonis weep;
And straight, in pity of his tender years,
They both would strive who first should dry his tears.

'To see his face the lion walk'd along
Behind some hedge, because he would not fear him;
To recreate himself when he hath sung,
The tiger would be tame and gently hear him;
If he had spoke, the wolf would leave his prey
And never fright the silly lamb that day.

'When he beheld his shadow in the brook,
The fishes spread on it their golden gills;
When he was by, the birds such pleasure took,
That some would sing, some other in their bills
Would bring him mulberries and ripe-red cherries;
He fed them with his sight, they him with berries.

'But this foul, grim, and urchin-snouted boar,
Whose downward eye still looketh for a grave,
Ne'er saw the beauteous livery that he wore;
Witness the entertainment that he gave:
If he did see his face, why then I know
He thought to kiss him, and hath kill'd him so.

''Tis true, 'tis true; thus was Adonis slain:
He ran upon the boar with his sharp spear,
Who did not whet his teeth at him again,
But by a kiss thought to persuade him there;
And nuzzling in his flank, the loving swine
Sheathed unaware the tusk in his soft groin.

'Had I been tooth'd like him, I must confess,
With kissing him I should have kill'd him first;
But he is dead, and never did he bless
My youth with his; the more am I accurst.'
With this, she falleth in the place she stood,
And stains her face with his congealed blood.

1094. *fear*, frighten. 1108. *entertainment*, usage.

She looks upon his lips, and they are pale;
She takes him by the hand, and that is cold;
She whispers in his ears a heavy tale,
As if they heard the woeful words she told;
She lifts the coffer-lids that close his eyes,
Where, lo, two lamps, burnt out, in darkness lies;

Two glasses, where herself herself beheld
A thousand times, and now no more reflect;
Their virtue lost, wherein they late excell'd,
And every beauty robb'd of his effect:
'Wonder of time,' quoth she, 'this is my spite,
That, thou being dead, the day should yet be light.

'Since thou art dead, lo, here I prophesy,
Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend:
It shall be waited on with jealousy,
Find sweet beginning, but unsavoury end;
Ne'er settled equally, but high or low,
That all love's pleasure shall not match his woe.

'It shall be fickle, false and full of fraud,
Bud and be blasted in a breathing-while;
The bottom poison, and the top o'erstraw'd
With sweets that shall the truest sight beguile:
The strongest body shall it make most weak,
Strike the wise dumb and teach the fool to speak.

'It shall be sparing and too full of riot,
Teaching decrepit age to tread the measures;
The staring ruffian shall it keep in quiet,
Pluck down the rich, enrich the poor with treasures;
It shall be raging-mad and silly-mild,
Make the young old, the old become a child.

1133. *spite*, grievance.

'It shall suspect where is no cause of fear;
It shall not fear where it should most mistrust;
It shall be merciful and too severe,
And most deceiving when it seems most just;
Perverse it shall be where it shows most toward,
Put fear to valour, courage to the coward.

'It shall be cause of war and dire events,
And set dissension 'twixt the son and sire;
Subject and servile to all discontents,
As dry combustious matter is to fire:
Sith in his prime Death doth my love destroy,
They that love best their loves shall not enjoy.'

By this, the boy that by her side lay kill'd
Was melted like a vapour from her sight,
And in his blood that on the ground lay spill'd,
A purple flower sprung up, chequer'd with white,
Resembling well his pale cheeks and the blood
Which in round drops upon their whiteness stood.

She bows her head, the new-sprung flower to smell,
Comparing it to her Adonis' breath,
And says, within her bosom it shall dwell,
Since he himself is reft from her by death:
She crops the stalk, and in the breach appears
Green dropping sap, which she compares to tears.

'Poor flower,' quoth she, 'this was thy father's guise—
Sweet issue of a more sweet-smelling sire—
For every little grief to wet his eyes:
To grow unto himself was his desire,

1168. *A purple flower . . . chequer'd with white.* Bion had said that Adonis' blood sprang up in the rose, his tears in the anemone.

And so 'tis thine; but know, it is as good
To wither in my breast as in his blood.

'Here was thy father's bed, here in my breast;
Thou art the next of blood, and 'tis thy right:
Lo, in this hollow cradle take thy rest;
My throbbing heart shall rock thee day and night:
There shall not be one minute in an hour
Wherein I will not kiss my sweet love's flower.'

Thus weary of the world, away she hies,
And yokes her silver doves; by whose swift aid
Their mistress mounted through the empty skies
In her light chariot quickly is convey'd;
Holding their course to Paphos, where their queen
Means to immure herself and not be seen.

THE RAPE OF LUCRECE

INTRODUCTION

The Rape of Lucrece was first published in 1594, with the following title:—

Lucrece. | London. | Printed by Richard Field, for John Harrison, and are | to be sold at the signe of the white Greyhound | in Paules Church-yard. 1594.

The running title is 'The Rape of Lucrece.'

Subsequent editions were issued in 1598, 1600, 1607, without substantial change; a number of variations, of little importance, occur in the fifth and sixth, which appeared in 1616 and 1624.

The date of composition is not doubtful. It falls within the year which followed the publication of the *Venus and Adonis* in 1593. In dedicating that 'first heir of his invention' to his patron Southampton, Shakespeare foreshadowed a 'graver labour' to which he promised 'to devote all idle hours,' for Southampton's honour. This graver labour, itself dedicated to Southampton, was unquestionably the *Lucrece*. The terms of the dedication show that the relation of patron and protégé had ripened into one of warm and admiring friendship on both sides.

For the rest, it is plain that Shakespeare's second poem was composed with more serious concentration of power than his first. But we must not exaggerate the clear division between the two into a gulf. It is

idle to suggest that the *Lucrece* was the poet's 'atonement' for the *Venus*. Its deeper tones denote no revolt or recantation, merely a resolve to give his work a fuller consonance with his own nature, to make it utter the richer harmonies of his music as well as its liquid and mellow soprano song. The story had a still older tradition in English than that of Adonis. Lucrece had been a mediæval type before she became one of the saints of Humanism. Chaucer had paraphrased her tale from Ovid,[1] and the comparison of the traits in it which Chaucer chose and left with those which Shakespeare retains and omits, offers a critical problem analogous to that presented by their treatment of the story of Troilus. But while in *Troilus and Cressida* Shakespeare is completely emancipated from the Chaucerian spell, and ruthlessly shatters the romantic world Chaucer had built up, it is here the influence of Chaucer's *Troilus* itself which, enforced by more immediate, contemporary, influences, colours Shakespeare's handling of the austerer 'tragedy' of Rome. He now employs the rich and harmonious stanza of seven lines, already familiar to Elizabethan poetry,[2] which Chaucer used with complete mastery in the *Troilus*, but had already discarded for the more flexible and nervous couplet in *The Legende of Good Women*. To it too we may attribute the predominance of rhetoric—of dialogue, soliloquy, apostrophe—in a tale where action is of more account than persuasion. The first two books of Chaucer's *Troilus* move amid scarcely interrupted scenes of persuasion and discourse. Troilus pleads with Pandarus, Pan-

[1] In *The Legende of Good Women*; he expressly quotes 'Ovid and Tytus Livius' as his authorities. The story in Ovid (*Fasti*, ii. 685 f.) occupies some 140 verses; in Chaucer 200.

[2] It had been quite recently used by Daniel in his *Complaint of Rosamond*, and by Greene in his *Maiden's Dream*. L.

darus with Creseide. Whereas his Tarquin permits no hour of civil amenities to be interposed irrelevantly between his purpose and its execution, but has no sooner burst into Lucretia's house than he 'stalks' into her chamber. Shakespeare, on the other hand, expands with evident delight Ovid's hint of Lucrece's hospitable courtesy into a dramatic scene charged with pathetic suggestion, the more so because we see it as reflected in the wavering mind of Tarquin, somewhat as we see the 'golden opinions' of men reflected in the wavering mind of Macbeth:—

> Quoth he, 'She took me kindly by the hand,
> And gazed for tidings in my eager eyes,
> Fearing some hard news from the warlike band,
> Where her beloved Collatinus lies,' etc.

More poignantly still, we are reminded of Othello's anguished cry as he hangs over the sleeping Desdemona —'Put out the light, and then put out the light,'—by Tarquin's bitter apostrophe to the torch which is about to light him to his victim:—

> Fair torch, burn out thy light, and lend it not
> To darken her whose light excelleth thine.

Of this long inward debate, neither Ovid's Tarquin nor Chaucer's knows anything. It is true that the dramatic execution is still far from Shakespearean: neither Tarquin nor Lucrece is bodied forth with convincing vitality; but the play of rhetoric is several degrees more remote than in the *Venus* from the curious ingenuities and idle elegances of arabesque; if incomplete as a presentation of life, it is woven of living material; we have to do, as an excellent critic of these poems has lately said, with 'a drama of emotion,' no longer with 'a pageant of gesture.'

THE RAPE OF LUCRECE

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY WRIOTHESLEY,

EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON AND BARON OF TITCHFIELD.

THE love I dedicate to your lordship is without end; whereof this pamphlet without beginning is but a superfluous moiety. The warrant I have of your honourable disposition, not the worth of my untutored lines, makes it assured of acceptance. What I have done is yours; what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duty would show greater; meantime, as it is, it is bound to your lordship, to whom I wish long life still lengthened with all happiness.

Your lordship's in all duty,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE ARGUMENT.

LUCIUS TARQUINIUS, for his excessive pride surnamed Superbus, after he had caused his own father-in-law Servius Tullius to be cruelly murdered, and, contrary to the Roman laws and customs, not requiring or staying for the people's suffrages, had possessed himself of the kingdom, went, accompanied with his sons and other noblemen of Rome, to besiege Ardea, during which siege the principal men of the army meeting one evening at the tent of Sextus Tarquinius, the king's son, in their discourses after supper every one commended the virtues of his own wife: among whom Collatinus extolled the incomparable chastity of his wife Lucretia. In that pleasant humour they all posted to Rome; and intending, by their secret and

sudden arrival, to make trial of that which every one had before avouched, only Collatinus finds his wife, though it were late in the night, spinning amongst her maids: the other ladies were all found dancing and revelling, or in several disports: whereupon the noblemen yielded Collatinus the victory, and his wife the fame. At that time Sextus Tarquinius being enflamed with Lucrece' beauty, yet smothering his passions for the present, departed with the rest back to the camp; from whence he shortly after privily withdrew himself, and was, according to his estate, royally entertained and lodged by Lucrece at Collatium. The same night he treacherously stealeth into her chamber, violently ravished her, and early in the morning speedeth away. Lucrece, in this lamentable plight, hastily dispatcheth messengers, one to Rome for her father, another to the camp for Collatine. They came, the one accompanied with Junius Brutus, the other with Publius Valerius; and finding Lucrece attired in mourning habit, demanded the cause of her sorrow. She, first taking an oath of them for her revenge, revealed the actor, and whole manner of his dealing, and withal suddenly stabbed herself. Which done, with one consent they all vowed to root out the whole hated family of the Tarquins; and bearing the dead body to Rome, Brutus acquainted the people with the doer and manner of the vile deed, with a bitter invective against the tyranny of the king: wherewith the people were so moved, that with one consent and a general acclamation the Tarquins were all exiled, and the state government changed from kings to consuls.

From the besiegèd Ardea all in post,
Borne by the trustless wings of false desire,
Lust-breathed Tarquin leaves the Roman host,
And to Collatium bears the lightless fire
Which, in pale embers hid, lurks to aspire
And girdle with embracing flames the waist
Of Collatine's fair love, Lucrece the chaste.

Haply that name of 'chaste' unhappily set
This bateless edge on his keen appetite;
When Collatine unwisely did not let

10. *let*, forbear.

To praise the clear unmatched red and white
Which triumph'd in that sky of his delight,
  Where mortal stars, as bright as heaven's beauties,
  With pure aspects did him peculiar duties.

For he the night before, in Tarquin's tent,
Unlock'd the treasure of his happy state;
What priceless wealth the heavens had him lent
In the possession of his beauteous mate;
Reckoning his fortune at such high-proud rate,
  That kings might be espoused to more fame,
  But king nor peer to such a peerless dame.

O happiness enjoy'd but of a few!
And, if possess'd, as soon decay'd and done
As is the morning's silver-melting dew
Against the golden splendour of the sun!
An expired date, cancell'd ere well begun:
  Honour and beauty, in the owner's arms,
  Are weakly fortress'd from a world of harms.

Beauty itself doth of itself persuade
The eyes of men without an orator;
What needeth then apologies be made,
To set forth that which is so singular?
Or why is Collatine the publisher
  Of that rich jewel he should keep unknown
  From thievish ears, because it is his own?

Perchance his boast of Lucrece' sovereignty
Suggested this proud issue of a king;
For by our ears our hearts oft tainted be:
Perchance that envy of so rich a thing,
Braving compare, disdainfully did sting

37. *Suggested*, tempted.

His high-pitch'd thoughts, that meaner men should vaunt
That golden hap which their superiors want.

But some untimely thought did instigate
His all-too-timeless speed, if none of those :
His honour, his affairs, his friends, his state,
Neglected all, with swift intent he goes
To quench the coal which in his liver glows.
O rash false heat, wrapp'd in repentant cold,
Thy hasty spring still blasts, and ne'er grows old !

When at Collatium this false lord arrived,
Well was he welcomed by the Roman dame,
Within whose face beauty and virtue strived
Which of them both should underprop her fame :
When virtue bragg'd, beauty would blush for shame ;
When beauty boasted blushes, in despite
Virtue would stain that o'er with silver white.

But beauty, in that white intituled,
From Venus' doves doth challenge that fair field :
Then virtue claims from beauty beauty's red,
Which virtue gave the golden age to gild
Their silver cheeks, and call'd it then their shield ;
Teaching them thus to use it in the fight,
When shame assail'd, the red should fence the white.

This heraldry in Lucrece' face was seen,
Argued by beauty's red and virtue's white :
Of either's colour was the other queen,
Proving from world's minority their right :
Yet their ambition makes them still to fight ;
The sovereignty of either being so great,
That oft they interchange each other's seat.

57. *intituled in*, becoming endowed with. L.

Their silent war of lilies and of roses,
Which Tarquin view'd in her fair face's field,
In their pure ranks his traitor eye encloses;
Where, lest between them both it should be kill'd,
The coward captive vanquished doth yield
To those two armies that would let him go,
Rather than triumph in so false a foe.

Now thinks he that her husband's shallow tongue,
The niggard prodigal that praised her so,
In that high task hath done her beauty wrong,
Which far exceeds his barren skill to show:
Therefore that praise which Collatine doth owe
Enchanted Tarquin answers with surmise,
In silent wonder of still-gazing eyes.

This earthly saint, adored by this devil,
Little suspecteth the false worshipper;
For unstain'd thoughts do seldom dream on evil;
Birds never limed no secret bushes fear:
So guiltless she securely gives good cheer
And reverend welcome to her princely guest,
Whose inward ill no outward harm express'd:

For that he colour'd with his high estate,
Hiding base sin in plaits of majesty;
That nothing in him seem'd inordinate,
Save sometime too much wonder of his eye,
Which, having all, all could not satisfy;
But, poorly rich, so wanteth in his store,
That, cloy'd with much, he pineth still for more.

But she, that never coped with stranger eyes,
Could pick no meaning from their parling looks,
Nor read the subtle-shining secrecies

89. *securely*, carelessly. 93. *plaits*, folds.
100. *parling*, speaking.

Writ in the glassy margents of such books:
She touch'd no unknown baits, nor fear'd no hooks;
  Nor could she moralize his wanton sight,
  More than his eyes were open'd to the light.

He stories to her ears her husband's fame,
Won in the fields of fruitful Italy;
And decks with praises Collatine's high name,
Made glorious by his manly chivalry
With bruised arms and wreaths of victory:
  Her joy with heaved-up hand she doth express,
  And, wordless, so greets heaven for his success.

Far from the purpose of his coming hither,
He makes excuses for his being there:
No cloudy show of stormy blustering weather
Doth yet in his fair welkin once appear;
Till sable Night, mother of Dread and Fear,
  Upon the world dim darkness doth display,
  And in her vaulty prison stows the Day.

For then is Tarquin brought unto his bed,
Intending weariness with heavy spright;
For, after supper, long he questioned
With modest Lucrece, and wore out the night:
Now leaden slumber with life's strength doth fight;
  And every one to rest themselves betake,
  Save thieves, and cares, and troubled minds, that wake.

As one of which doth Tarquin lie revolving
The sundry dangers of his will's obtaining;
Yet ever to obtain his will resolving,
Though weak-built hopes persuade him to abstaining:
Despair to gain doth traffic oft for gaining;

104. *moralize*, interpret.

And when great treasure is the meed proposed,
Though death be adjunct, there's no death supposed.

Those that much covet are with gain so fond,
That what they have not, that which they possess
They scatter and unloose it from their bond,
And so, by hoping more, they have but less;
Or, gaining more, the profit of excess
Is but to surfeit, and such griefs sustain,
That they prove bankrupt in this poor-rich gain.

The aim of all is but to nurse the life
With honour, wealth, and ease, in waning age;
And in this aim there is such thwarting strife,
That one for all, or all for one we gage;
As life for honour in fell battle's rage;
Honour for wealth; and oft that wealth doth cost
The death of all, and all together lost.

So that in venturing ill we leave to be
The things we are for that which we expect;
And this ambitious foul infirmity,
In having much, torments us with defect
Of that we have: so then we do neglect
The thing we have; and, all for want of wit,
Make something nothing by augmenting it.

Such hazard now must doting Tarquin make,
Pawning his honour to obtain his lust;
And for himself himself he must forsake:
Then where is truth, if there be no self-trust?
When shall he think to find a stranger just,
When he himself himself confounds, betrays
To slanderous tongues and wretched hateful days?

Now stole upon the time the dead of night,
When heavy sleep had closed up mortal eyes:
No comfortable star did lend his light,
No noise but owls' and wolves' death-boding cries;
Now serves the season that they may surprise
The silly lambs: pure thoughts are dead and still,
While lust and murder wake to stain and kill.

And now this lustful lord, leap'd from his bed,
Throwing his mantle rudely o'er his arm;
Is madly toss'd between desire and dread;
Th' one sweetly flatters, th' other feareth harm;
But honest fear, bewitch'd with lust's foul charm,
Doth too too oft betake him to retire,
Beaten away by brain-sick rude desire.

His falchion on a flint he softly smiteth,
That from the cold stone sparks of fire do fly;
Whereat a waxen torch forthwith he lighteth,
Which must be lode-star to his lustful eye;
And to the flame thus speaks advisedly:
'As from this cold flint I enforced this fire,
So Lucrece must I force to my desire.'

Here pale with fear he doth premeditate
The dangers of his loathsome enterprise,
And in his inward mind he doth debate
What following sorrow may on this arise:
Then looking scornfully, he doth despise
His naked armour of still-slaughter'd lust,
And justly thus controls his thoughts unjust:

'Fair torch, burn out thy light, and lend it not
To darken her whose light excelleth thine:
And die, unhallow'd thoughts, before you blot

169. *leap'd*, having leaped.

188. *naked*, defenceless.

188. *still-slaughter'd*, ever being slain but ever returning to life.

With your uncleanness that which is divine:
Offer pure incense to so pure a shrine:
Let fair humanity abhor the deed
That spots and stains love's modest snow-white weed.

'O shame to knighthood and to shining arms!
O foul dishonour to my household's grave!
O impious act, including all foul harms!
A martial man to be soft fancy's slave!
True valour still a true respect should have;
Then my digression is so vile, so base,
That it will live engraven in my face.

'Yea, though I die, the scandal will survive,
And be an eye-sore in my golden coat;
Some loathsome dash the herald will contrive,
To cipher me how fondly I did dote;
That my posterity, shamed with the note,
Shall curse my bones, and hold it for no sin
To wish that I their father had not been.

'What win I, if I gain the thing I seek?
A dream, a breath, a froth of fleeting joy.
Who buys a minute's mirth to wail a week?
Or sells eternity to get a toy?
For one sweet grape who will the vine destroy?
Or what fond beggar, but to touch the crown,
Would with the sceptre straight be strucken down?

'If Collatinus dream of my intent,
Will he not wake, and in a desperate rage
Post hither, this vile purpose to prevent?
This siege that hath engirt his marriage,
This blur to youth, this sorrow to the sage,

200. *fancy*, love. 216. *fond*, foolish.

This dying virtue, this surviving shame,
Whose crime will bear an ever-during blame?

'O, what excuse can my invention make,
When thou shalt charge me with so black a deed?
Will not my tongue be mute, my frail joints shake,
Mine eyes forgo their light, my false heart bleed?
The guilt being great, the fear doth still exceed;
And extreme fear can neither fight nor fly,
But coward-like with trembling terror die.

'Had Collatinus kill'd my son or sire,
Or lain in ambush to betray my life,
Or were he not my dear friend, this desire
Might have excuse to work upon his wife,
As in revenge or quittal of such strife:
But as he is my kinsman, my dear friend,
The shame and fault finds no excuse nor end.

'Shameful it is; ay, if the fact be known:
Hateful it is; there is no hate in loving:
I'll beg her love; but she is not her own:
The worst is but denial and reproving:
My will is strong, past reason's weak removing.
Who fears a sentence or an old man's saw
Shall by a painted cloth be kept in awe.'

Thus, graceless, holds he disputation
'Tween frozen conscience and hot-burning will,
And with good thoughts makes dispensation,
Urging the worser sense for vantage still;
Which in a moment doth confound and kill
All pure effects, and doth so far proceed,
That what is vile shows like a virtuous deed.

Quoth he, 'She took me kindly by the hand,
And gazed for tidings in my eager eyes,
Fearing some hard news from the warlike band,

Where her beloved Collatinus lies.
O, how her fear did make her colour rise!
First red as roses that on lawn we lay,
Then white as lawn, the roses took away.

'And how her hand, in my hand being lock'd,
Forced it to tremble with her loyal fear!
Which struck her sad, and then it faster rock'd,
Until her husband's welfare she did hear;
Whereat she smiled with so sweet a cheer,
That had Narcissus seen her as she stood,
Self-love had never drown'd him in the flood.

'Why hunt I then for colour or excuses?
All orators are dumb when beauty pleadeth;
Poor wretches have remorse in poor abuses;
Love thrives not in the heart that shadows dreadeth:
Affection is my captain, and he leadeth;
And when his gaudy banner is display'd,
The coward fights and will not be dismay'd.

'Then, childish fear avaunt! debating die!
Respect and reason wait on wrinkled age!
My heart shall never countermand mine eye:
Sad pause and deep regard beseem the sage;
My part is youth, and beats these from the stage:
Desire my pilot is, beauty my prize;
Then who fears sinking where such treasure lies?'

As corn o'ergrown by weeds, so heedful fear
Is almost choked by unresisted lust.
Away he steals with open listening ear,
Full of foul hope and full of fond mistrust;
Both which, as servitors to the unjust,
So cross him with their opposite persuasion,
That now he vows a league, and now invasion.

259. *took*, taken.

Within his thought her heavenly image sits,
And in the self-same seat sits Collatine:
That eye which looks on her confounds his wits;
That eye which him beholds, as more divine,
Unto a view so false will not incline;
But with a pure appeal seeks to the heart,
Which once corrupted takes the worser part;

And therein heartens up his servile powers,
Who, flatter'd by their leader's jocund show,
Stuff up his lust, as minutes fill up hours;
And as their captain, so their pride doth grow,
Paying more slavish tribute than they owe.
By reprobate desire thus madly led,
The Roman lord marcheth to Lucrece' bed.

The locks between her chamber and his will,
Each one by him enforced retires his ward;
But, as they open, they all rate his ill,
Which drives the creeping thief to some regard:
The threshold grates the door to have him heard;
Night-wandering weasels shriek to see him there;
They fright him, yet he still pursues his fear.

As each unwilling portal yields him way,
Through little vents and crannies of the place
The wind wars with his torch to make him stay,
And blows the smoke of it into his face,
Extinguishing his conduct in this case;
But his hot heart, which fond desire doth scorch,
Puffs forth another wind that fires the torch:

And being lighted, by the light he spies
Lucretia's glove, wherein her needle sticks:

293. *seeks to*, seeks, assails.
304. *rate*, chide.
313. *conduct*, guide, conductor.

He takes it from the rushes where it lies,
And griping it, the needle his finger pricks;
As who should say 'This glove to wanton tricks
  Is not inured; return again in haste;
  Thou see'st our mistress' ornaments are chaste.'

But all these poor forbiddings could not stay him;
He in the worst sense construes their denial:
The doors, the wind, the glove, that did delay him,
He takes for accidental things of trial;
Or as those bars which stop the hourly dial,
  Who with a lingering stay his course doth let,
  Till every minute pays the hour his debt.

'So, so,' quoth he, 'these lets attend the time,
Like little frosts that sometime threat the spring,
To add a more rejoicing to the prime,
And give the sneaped birds more cause to sing.
Pain pays the income of each precious thing;
  Huge rocks, high winds, strong pirates, shelves
    and sands,
  The merchant fears, ere rich at home he lands.'

Now is he come unto the chamber door,
That shuts him from the heaven of his thought,
Which with a yielding latch, and with no more,
Hath barr'd him from the blessed thing he sought.
So from himself impiety hath wrought,
  That for his prey to pray he doth begin,
  As if the heavens should countenance his sin.

But in the midst of his unfruitful prayer,
Having solicited th' eternal power
That his foul thoughts might compass his fair fair,

318. *the rushes.* Rushes were still commonly spread upon the floors of Elizabethan houses. The custom was unknown at Rome.

319. *needle;* pron. 'neeld.'

330. *lets,* obstacles.

333. *sneaped,* nipped.

And they would stand auspicious to the hour,
Even there he starts: quoth he, 'I must deflower:
The powers to whom I pray abhor this fact,
How can they then assist me in the act?

'Then Love and Fortune be my gods, my guide!
My will is back'd with resolution:
Thoughts are but dreams till their effects be tried;
The blackest sin is clear'd with absolution;
Against love's fire fear's frost hath dissolution.
The eye of heaven is out, and misty night
Covers the shame that follows sweet delight.'

This said, his guilty hand pluck'd up the latch,
And with his knee the door he opens wide.
The dove sleeps fast that this night-owl will catch:
Thus treason works ere traitors be espied.
Who sees the lurking serpent steps aside;
But she, sound sleeping, fearing no such thing,
Lies at the mercy of his mortal sting.

Into the chamber wickedly he stalks,
And gazeth on her yet unstained bed.
The curtains being close, about he walks,
Rolling his greedy eyeballs in his head:
By their high treason is his heart misled;
Which gives the watch-word to his hand full soon
To draw the cloud that hides the silver moon.

Look, as the fair and fiery-pointed sun,
Rushing from forth a cloud, bereaves our sight;
Even so, the curtain drawn, his eyes begun
To wink, being blinded with a greater light:
Whether it is that she reflects so bright,
That dazzleth them, or else some shame supposed;
But blind they are, and keep themselves enclosed.

349. *fact*, crime.

O, had they in that darksome prison died!
Then had they seen the period of their ill;
Then Collatine again, by Lucrece' side,
In his clear bed might have reposed still:
But they must ope, this blessed league to kill;
And holy-thoughted Lucrece to their sight
Must sell her joy, her life, her world's delight.

Her lily hand her rosy cheek lies under,
Cozening the pillow of a lawful kiss;
Who, therefore angry, seems to part in sunder,
Swelling on either side to want his bliss;
Between whose hills her head entombed is:
Where, like a virtuous monument, she lies,
To be admired of lewd unhallow'd eyes.

Without the bed her other fair hand was,
On the green coverlet; whose perfect white
Show'd like an April daisy on the grass,
With pearly sweat, resembling dew of night.
Her eyes, like marigolds, had sheathed their light,
And canopied in darkness sweetly lay,
Till they might open to adorn the day.

Her hair, like golden threads, play'd with her breath;
O modest wantons! wanton modesty!
Showing life's triumph in the map of death,
And death's dim look in life's mortality:
Each in her sleep themselves so beautify,
As if between them twain there were no strife,
But that life lived in death, and death in life.

Her breasts, like ivory globes circled with blue,
A pair of maiden worlds unconquered,
Save of their lord no bearing yoke they knew,

402. *map*, picture.

And him by oath they truly honoured.
These worlds in Tarquin new ambition bred;
  Who, like a foul usurper, went about
  From this fair throne to heave the owner out.

What could he see but mightily he noted?
What did he note but strongly he desired?
What he beheld, on that he firmly doted,
And in his will his wilful eye he tired.
With more than admiration he admired
  Her azure veins, her alabaster skin,
  Her coral lips, her snow-white dimpled chin.

As the grim lion fawneth o'er his prey,
Sharp hunger by the conquest satisfied,
So o'er this sleeping soul doth Tarquin stay,
His rage of lust by gazing qualified;
Slack'd, not suppress'd; for standing by her side,
  His eye, which late this mutiny restrains,
  Unto a greater uproar tempts his veins:

And they, like straggling slaves for pillage fighting,
Obdurate vassals fell exploits effecting,
In bloody death and ravishment delighting,
Nor children's tears nor mothers' groans respecting,
Swell in their pride, the onset still expecting:
  Anon his beating heart, alarum striking,
  Gives the hot charge and bids them do their
    liking.

His drumming heart cheers up his burning eye,
His eye commends the leading to his hand;
His hand, as proud of such a dignity,
Smoking with pride, march'd on to make his stand
On her bare breast, the heart of all her land;

424. *qualified*, lessened. 436. *leading*, command.

Whose ranks of blue veins, as his hand did scale,
Left their round turrets destitute and pale.

They, mustering to the quiet cabinet
Where their dear governess and lady lies,
Do tell her she is dreadfully beset,
And fright her with confusion of their cries:
She, much amazed, breaks ope her lock'd-up eyes,
Who, peeping forth this tumult to behold,
Are by his flaming torch dimm'd and controll'd.

Imagine her as one in dead of night
From forth dull sleep by dreadful fancy waking,
That thinks she hath beheld some ghastly sprite,
Whose grim aspect sets every joint a-shaking;
What terror 'tis! but she, in worser taking,
From sleep disturbed, heedfully doth view
The sight which makes supposed terror true.

Wrapp'd and confounded in a thousand fears,
Like to a new-kill'd bird she trembling lies;
She dares not look; yet, winking, there appears
Quick-shifting antics, ugly in her eyes:
Such shadows are the weak brain's forgeries;
Who, angry that the eyes fly from their lights,
In darkness daunts them with more dreadful sights.

His hand, that yet remains upon her breast,—
Rude ram, to batter such an ivory wall!—
May feel her heart—poor citizen!—distress'd,
Wounding itself to death, rise up and fall,
Beating her bulk, that his hand shakes withal.

453. *taking*, agony of alarm. The word still survives as a vulgarism.

458. *winking*, with her eyes closed.

459. *antics*, phantoms.

This moves in him more rage and lesser pity,
To make the breach and enter this sweet city.

First, like a trumpet, doth his tongue begin
To sound a parley to his heartless foe;
Who o'er the white sheet peers her whiter chin,
The reason of this rash alarm to know,
Which he by dumb demeanour seeks to show;
But she with vehement prayers urgeth still
Under what colour he commits this ill.

Thus he replies: 'The colour in thy face,
That even for anger makes the lily pale
And the red rose blush at her own disgrace,
Shall plead for me and tell my loving tale:
Under that colour am I come to scale
Thy never-conquer'd fort: the fault is thine,
For those thine eyes betray thee unto mine.

'Thus I forestall thee, if thou mean to chide:
Thy beauty hath ensnared thee to this night,
Where thou with patience must my will abide;
My will that marks thee for my earth's delight,
Which I to conquer sought with all my might;
But as reproof and reason beat it dead,
By that bright beauty was it newly bred.

'I see what crosses my attempt will bring;
I know what thorns the growing rose defends;
I think the honey guarded with a sting;
All this beforehand counsel comprehends:
But will is deaf and hears no heedful friends;
Only he hath an eye to gaze on beauty,
And dotes on what he looks, 'gainst law or duty.

470. *trumpet*, trumpeter
471. *heartless*, overwhelmed with fear.

'I have debated, even in my soul,
What wrong, what shame, what sorrow I shall breed;
But nothing can affection's course control,
Or stop the headlong fury of his speed.
I know repentant tears ensue the deed,
Reproach, disdain, and deadly enmity;
Yet strive I to embrace mine infamy.'

This said, he shakes aloft his Roman blade,
Which, like a falcon towering in the skies,
Coucheth the fowl below with his wings' shade,
Whose crooked beak threats if he mount he dies:
So under his insulting falchion lies
Harmless Lucretia, marking what he tells
With trembling fear, as fowl hear falcon's bells.

'Lucrece,' quoth he, 'this night I must enjoy thee:
If thou deny, then force must work my way,
For in thy bed I purpose to destroy thee:
That done, some worthless slave of thine I 'll slay,
To kill thine honour with thy life's decay;
And in thy dead arms do I mean to place him,
Swearing I slew him, seeing thee embrace him.

'So thy surviving husband shall remain
The scornful mark of every open eye;
Thy kinsmen hang their heads at this disdain,
Thy issue blurr'd with nameless bastardy:
And thou, the author of their obloquy,
Shalt have thy trespass cited up in rhymes,
And sung by children in succeeding times.

'But if thou yield, I rest thy secret friend:
The fault unknown is as a thought unacted;
A little harm done to a great good end

502. *ensue*, follow upon. 507. *Coucheth*, makes cower.

For lawful policy remains enacted.
The poisonous simple sometimes is compacted
In a pure compound; being so applied,
His venom in effect is purified.

'Then, for thy husband and thy children's sake,
Tender my suit: bequeath not to their lot
The shame that from them no device can take,
The blemish that will never be forgot;
Worse than a slavish wipe or birth-hour's blot:
For marks descried in men's nativity
Are nature's faults, not their own infamy.'

Here with a cockatrice' dead-killing eye
He rouseth up himself and makes a pause;
While she, the picture of pure piety,
Like a white hind under the gripe's sharp claws,
Pleads, in a wilderness where are no laws,
To the rough beast that knows no gentle right,
Nor aught obeys but his foul appetite.

But when a black-faced cloud the world doth threat,
In his dim mist the aspiring mountains hiding,
From earth's dark womb some gentle gust doth get,
Which blows these pitchy vapours from their biding,
Hindering their present fall by this dividing;
So his unhallow'd haste her words delays,
And moody Pluto winks while Orpheus plays.

Yet, foul night-waking cat, he doth but dally,
While in his hold-fast foot the weak mouse panteth:
Her sad behaviour feeds his vulture folly,

534. *Tender*, regard.
537. *wipe*, brand.
543. *gripe*, griffin (cf. Ger. 'Greif'). It was conceived as 'a mixed and dubious animal, in the forepart resembling an eagle, and behind the shape of a lion' (Sir T. Browne). The term was also applied to the vulture.

A swallowing gulf that even in plenty wanteth;
His ear her prayers admits, but his heart granteth
No penetrable entrance to her plaining:
Tears harden lust, though marble wear with raining.

Her pity-pleading eyes are sadly fixed
In the remorseless wrinkles of his face;
Her modest eloquence with sighs is mixed,
Which to her oratory adds more grace.
She puts the period often from his place;
And midst the sentence so her accent breaks,
That twice she doth begin ere once she speaks.

She conjures him by high almighty Jove,
By knighthood, gentry, and sweet friendship's oath,
By her untimely tears, her husband's love,
By holy human law, and common troth,
By heaven and earth, and all the power of both,
That to his borrow'd bed he make retire,
And stoop to honour, not to foul desire.

Quoth she: 'Reward not hospitality
With such black payment as thou hast pretended;
Mud not the fountain that gave drink to thee;
Mar not the thing that cannot be amended;
End thy ill aim before thy shoot be ended;
He is no woodman that doth bend his bow
To strike a poor unseasonable doe.

'My husband is thy friend; for his sake spare me:
Thyself art mighty; for thine own sake leave me:
Myself a weakling; do not then ensnare me:
Thou look'st not like deceit; do not deceive me.
My sighs, like whirlwinds, labour hence to heave thee:

574. *stoop*, yield. 576. *pretended*, proffered.

If ever man were moved with woman's moans,
Be moved with my tears, my sighs, my groans:

'All which together, like a troubled ocean,
Beat at thy rocky and wreck-threatening heart,
To soften it with their continual motion;
For stones dissolved to water do convert.
O, if no harder than a stone thou art,
Melt at my tears, and be compassionate!
Soft pity enters at an iron gate.

'In Tarquin's likeness I did entertain thee:
Hast thou put on his shape to do him shame?
To all the host of heaven I complain me,
Thou wrong'st his honour, wound'st his princely name.
Thou art not what thou seem'st; and if the same,
Thou art not what thou seem'st, a god, a king;
For kings like gods should govern every thing.

'How will thy shame be seeded in thine age,
When thus thy vices bud before thy spring!
If in thy hope thou darest do such outrage,
What darest thou not when once thou art a king?
O, be remember'd, no outrageous thing
From vassal actors can be wiped away;
Then kings' misdeeds cannot be hid in clay.

'This deed will make thee only loved for fear;
But happy monarchs still are fear'd for love:
With foul offenders thou perforce must bear,
When they in thee the like offences prove:
If but for fear of this, thy will remove;
For princes are the glass, the school, the book,
Where subjects' eyes do learn, do read, do look.

'And wilt thou be the school where Lust shall learn?
Must he in thee read lectures of such shame?
Wilt thou be glass wherein it shall discern
Authority for sin, warrant for blame,
To privilege dishonour in thy name?
Thou back'st reproach against long-living laud,
And makest fair reputation but a bawd.

'Hast thou command? by him that gave it thee,
From a pure heart command thy rebel will:
Draw not thy sword to guard iniquity,
For it was lent thee all that brood to kill.
Thy princely office how canst thou fulfil,
When, pattern'd by thy fault, foul sin may say,
He learn'd to sin, and thou didst teach the way?

'Think but how vile a spectacle it were,
To view thy present trespass in another.
Men's faults do seldom to themselves appear;
Their own transgressions partially they smother:
This guilt would seem death-worthy in thy brother.
O, how are they wrapp'd in with infamies
That from their own misdeeds askance their eyes!

'To thee, to thee, my heaved-up hands appeal,
Not to seducing lust, thy rash relier:
I sue for exiled majesty's repeal;
Let him return, and flattering thoughts retire:
His true respect will prison false desire,
And wipe the dim mist from thy doting eyne,
That thou shalt see thy state and pity mine.'

'Have done,' quoth he: 'my uncontrolled tide
Turns not, but swells the higher by this let.
Small lights are soon blown out, huge fires abide,

637. *askance*, turn away.
639. *thy rash relier*, i. e. (Lust), 'which confides too rashly in thy present disposition' (Schmidt).

And with the wind in greater fury fret:
The petty streams that pay a daily debt
To their salt sovereign, with their fresh falls' haste
Add to his flow, but alter not his taste.'

'Thou art,' quoth she, 'a sea, a sovereign king;
And, lo, there falls into thy boundless flood
Black lust, dishonour, shame, misgoverning,
Who seek to stain the ocean of thy blood.
If all these petty ills shall change thy good,
Thy sea within a puddle's womb is hearsed,
And not the puddle in thy sea dispersed.

'So shall these slaves be king, and thou their slave;
Thou nobly base, they basely dignified;
Thou their fair life, and they thy fouler grave:
Thou loathed in their shame, they in thy pride:
The lesser thing should not the greater hide;
The cedar stoops not to the base shrub's foot,
But low shrubs wither at the cedar's root.

'So let thy thoughts, low vassals to thy state'—
'No more,' quoth he; 'by heaven, I will not hear thee:
Yield to my love; if not, enforced hate,
Instead of love's coy touch, shall rudely tear thee:
That done, despitefully I mean to bear thee
Unto the base bed of some rascal groom,
To be thy partner in this shameful doom.'

This said, he sets his foot upon the light,
For light and lust are deadly enemies:
Shame folded up in blind concealing night,
When most unseen, then most doth tyrannize.
The wolf hath seized his prey, the poor lamb cries;
Till with her own white fleece her voice controll'd
Entombs her outcry in her lips' sweet fold:

For with the nightly linen that she wears
He pens her piteous clamours in her head,
Cooling his hot face in the chastest tears
That ever modest eyes with sorrow shed.
O, that prone lust should stain so pure a bed!
The spots whereof, could weeping purify,
Her tears should drop on them perpetually.

But she hath lost a dearer thing than life,
And he hath won what he would lose again:
This forced league doth force a further strife;
This momentary joy breeds months of pain;
This hot desire converts to cold disdain:
Pure Chastity is rifled of her store,
And Lust, the thief, far poorer than before.

Look, as the full-fed hound or gorged hawk,
Unapt for tender smell or speedy flight,
Make slow pursuit, or altogether balk
The prey wherein by nature they delight;
So surfeit-taking Tarquin fares this night:
His taste delicious, in digestion souring,
Devours his will, that lived by foul devouring.

O, deeper sin than bottomless conceit
Can comprehend in still imagination!
Drunken Desire must vomit his receipt,
Ere he can see his own abomination.
While Lust is in his pride, no exclamation
Can curb his heat or rein his rash desire,
Till, like a jade Self-will, himself doth tire.

And then with lank and lean discolour'd cheek,
With heavy eye, knit brow, and strengthless pace,
Feeble Desire, all recreant, poor, and meek,

696. *balk*, neglect. 701. *conceit*, imagination.

Like to a bankrupt beggar wails his case:
The flesh being proud, Desire doth fight with Grace,
For there it revels, and when that decays,
The guilty rebel for remission prays.

So fares it with this faultful lord of Rome,
Who this accomplishment so hotly chased;
For now against himself he sounds this doom,
That through the length of times he stands disgraced:
Besides, his soul's fair temple is defaced;
To whose weak ruins muster troops of cares,
To ask the spotted princess how she fares.

She says, her subjects with foul insurrection
Have batter'd down her consecrated wall,
And by their mortal fault brought in subjection
Her immortality, and made her thrall
To living death and pain perpetual:
Which in her prescience she controlled still,
But her foresight could not forestall their will.

Even in this thought through the dark night he stealeth,
A captive victor that hath lost in gain;
Bearing away the wound that nothing healeth,
The scar that will, despite of cure, remain;
Leaving his spoil perplex'd in greater pain.
She bears the load of lust he left behind,
And he the burthen of a guilty mind.

He like a thievish dog creeps sadly thence;
She like a wearied lamb lies panting there;
He scowls and hates himself for his offence;
She, desperate, with her nails her flesh doth tear;
He faintly flies, sweating with guilty fear;

She stays, exclaiming on the direful night;
He runs, and chides his vanish'd, loathed delight.

He thence departs a heavy convertite;
She there remains a hopeless castaway;
He in his speed looks for the morning light;
She prays she never may behold the day,
'For day,' quoth she, 'night's scapes doth open lay,
And my true eyes have never practised how
To cloak offences with a cunning brow.

'They think not but that every eye can see
The same disgrace which they themselves behold;
And therefore would they still in darkness be,
To have their unseen sin remain untold;
For they their guilt with weeping will unfold,
And grave, like water that doth eat in steel,
Upon my cheeks what helpless shame I feel.'

Here she exclaims against repose and rest,
And bids her eyes hereafter still be blind.
She wakes her heart by beating on her breast,
And bids it leap from thence, where it may find
Some purer chest to close so pure a mind.
Frantic with grief thus breathes she forth her spite
Against the unseen secrecy of night:

'O comfort-killing Night, image of hell!
Dim register and notary of shame!
Black stage for tragedies and murders fell!
Vast sin-concealing chaos! nurse of blame!
Blind muffled bawd! dark harbour for defame!
Grim cave of death! whispering conspirator
With close-tongued treason and the ravisher!

747. *scapes*, sins.

766. *Black stage*, etc.; alluding to the black hangings used on the stage when tragedies were performed.

'O hateful, vaporous, and foggy Night!
Since thou art guilty of my cureless crime,
Muster thy mists to meet the eastern light,
Make war against proportion'd course of time;
Or if thou wilt permit the sun to climb
His wonted height, yet ere he go to bed,
Knit poisonous clouds about his golden head.

'With rotten damps ravish the morning air;
Let their exhaled unwholesome breaths make sick
The life of purity, the supreme fair,
Ere he arrive his weary noon-tide prick;
And let thy misty vapours march so thick
That in their smoky ranks his smother'd light
May set at noon and make perpetual night.

'Were Tarquin Night, as he is but Night's child,
The silver-shining queen he would distain;
Her twinkling handmaids too, by him defiled,
Through Night's black bosom should not peep again:
So should I have co-partners in my pain;
And fellowship in woe doth woe assuage,
As palmers' chat makes short their pilgrimage.

'Where now I have no one to blush with me,
To cross their arms and hang their heads with mine,
To mask their brows and hide their infamy;
But I alone alone must sit and pine,
Seasoning the earth with showers of silver brine,
Mingling my talk with tears, my grief with groans,
Poor wasting monuments of lasting moans.

781. *prick*, mark on the dial.
786. *distain*, defile.
793. Folded arms were a recognised sign of melancholy.

'O Night, thou furnace of foul-reeking smoke,
Let not the jealous Day behold that face
Which underneath thy black all-hiding cloak
Immodestly lies martyr'd with disgrace!
Keep still possession of thy gloomy place,
That all the faults which in thy reign are made
May likewise be sepulchred in thy shade!

'Make me not object to the tell-tale Day!
The light will show, charácter'd in my brow,
The story of sweet chastity's decay,
The impious breach of holy wedlock vow:
Yea, the illiterate, that know not how
To cipher what is writ in learned books,
Will quote my loathsome trespass in my looks.

'The nurse, to still her child, will tell my story,
And fright her crying babe with Tarquin's name;
The orator, to deck his oratory,
Will couple my reproach to Tarquin's shame;
Feast-finding minstrels, tuning my defame,
Will tie the hearers to attend each line,
How Tarquin wronged me, I Collatine.

'Let my good name, that senseless reputation,
For Collatine's dear love be kept unspotted:
If that be made a theme for disputation,
The branches of another root are rotted,
And undeserved reproach to him allotted
That is as clear from this attaint of mine
As I, ere this, was pure to Collatine.

'O unseen shame! invisible disgrace!
O unfelt sore! crest-wounding, private scar!

812. *quote*, note.

828. *crest-wounding*, injuring nobility; in Shakespeare's time armorial bearings were a sign of rank.

Reproach is stamp'd in Collatinus' face,
And Tarquin's eye may read the mot afar,
How "he in peace is wounded, not in war."
Alas, how many bear such shameful blows,
Which not themselves, but he that gives them knows!

'If, Collatine, thine honour lay in me,
From me by strong assault it is bereft.
My honey lost, and I, a drone-like bee,
Have no perfection of my summer left,
But robb'd and ransack'd by injurious theft:
In thy weak hive a wandering wasp hath crept,
And suck'd the honey which thy chaste bee kept.

'Yet am I guilty of thy honour's wrack;
Yet for thy honour did I entertain him;
Coming from thee, I could not put him back,
For it had been dishonour to disdain him:
Besides, of weariness he did complain him,
And talk'd of virtue: O unlook'd-for evil,
When virtue is profaned in such a devil!

'Why should the worm intrude the maiden bud?
Or hateful cuckoos hatch in sparrows' nests?
Or toads infect fair founts with venom mud?
Or tyrant folly lurk in gentle breasts?
Or kings be breakers of their own behests?
But no perfection is so absolute
That some impurity doth not pollute.

'The aged man that coffers-up his gold
Is plagued with cramps and gouts and painful fits;
And scarce hath eyes his treasure to behold,

830. *mot*, motto.

But like still-pining Tantalus he sits
And useless barns the harvest of his wits;
Having no other pleasure of his gain
But torment that it cannot cure his pain.

'So then he hath it when he cannot use it,
And leaves it to be master'd by his young;
Who in their pride do presently abuse it:
Their father was too weak, and they too strong,
To hold their cursed-blessed fortune long.
The sweets we wish for turn to loathed sours
Even in the moment that we call them ours.

'Unruly blasts wait on the tender spring;
Unwholesome weeds take root with precious flowers;
The adder hisses where the sweet birds sing;
What virtue breeds iniquity devours:
We have no good that we can say is ours,
But ill-annexed Opportunity
Or kills his life or else his quality.

'O Opportunity, thy guilt is great!
'Tis thou that executest the traitor's treason:
Thou set'st the wolf where he the lamb may get;
Whoever plots the sin, thou 'point'st the season;
'Tis thou that spurn'st at right, at law, at reason;
And in thy shady cell, where none may spy him,
Sits Sin, to seize the souls that wander by him.

'Thou makest the vestal violate her oath;
Thou blow'st the fire when temperance is thaw'd;
Thou smother'st honesty, thou murder'st troth;
Thou foul abettor! thou notorious bawd!
Thou plantest scandal and displacest laud:

859. *barns*, garners. 864. *abuse*, misuse.

Thou ravisher, thou traitor, thou false thief,
Thy honey turns to gall, thy joy to grief!

'Thy secret pleasure turns to open shame,
Thy private feasting to a public fast,
Thy smoothing titles to a ragged name,
Thy sugar'd tongue to bitter wormwood taste:
Thy violent vanities can never last.
How comes it then, vile Opportunity,
Being so bad, such numbers seek for thee?

'When wilt thou be the humble suppliant's friend,
And bring him where his suit may be obtain'd?
When wilt thou sort an hour great strifes to end?
Or free that soul which wretchedness hath chain'd?
Give physic to the sick, ease to the pain'd?
The poor, lame, blind, halt, creep, cry out for thee;
But they ne'er meet with Opportunity.

'The patient dies while the physician sleeps;
The orphan pines while the oppressor feeds;
Justice is feasting while the widow weeps;
Advice is sporting while infection breeds:
Thou grant'st no time for charitable deeds:
Wrath, envy, treason, rape, and murder's rages,
Thy heinous hours wait on them as their pages.

'When Truth and Virtue have to do with thee,
A thousand crosses keep them from thy aid:
They buy thy help; but Sin ne'er gives a fee;
He gratis comes, and thou art well appaid
As well to hear as grant what he hath said.
My Collatine would else have come to me
When Tarquin did, but he was stay'd by thee.

899. *sort*, contrive.
907. *Advice*, medical counsel.
912. *crosses*, mischances.
914. *appaid*, pleased.

'Guilty thou art of murder and of theft,
Guilty of perjury and subornation,
Guilty of treason, forgery, and shift,
Guilty of incest, that abomination;
An accessary by thine inclination
To all sins past, and all that are to come,
From the creation to the general doom.

'Mis-shapen Time, copesmate of ugly Night,
Swift subtle post, carrier of grisly care,
Eater of youth, false slave to false delight,
Base watch of woes, sin's pack-horse, virtue's snare;
Thou nursest all and murder'st all that are:
O, hear me then, injurious, shifting Time!
Be guilty of my death, since of my crime.

'Why hath thy servant, Opportunity,
Betray'd the hours thou gavest me to repose,
Cancell'd my fortunes, and enchained me
To endless date of never-ending woes?
Time's office is to fine the hate of foes,
To eat up errors by opinion bred,
Not spend the dowry of a lawful bed.

'Time's glory is to calm contending kings,
To unmask falsehood and bring truth to light,
To stamp the seal of time in aged things,
To wake the morn and sentinel the night,
To wrong the wronger till he render right,
To ruinate proud buildings with thy hours,
And smear with dust their glittering golden towers;

'To fill with worm-holes stately monuments,
To feed oblivion with decay of things,
To blot old books and alter their contents,

925. *copesmate*, companion. 936. *fine*, to bring to an end.

To pluck the quills from ancient ravens' wings,
To dry the old oak's sap and cherish springs,
  To spoil antiquities of hammer'd steel,
  And turn the giddy round of Fortune's wheel;

'To show the beldam daughters of her daughter,
To make the child a man, the man a child,
To slay the tiger that doth live by slaughter,
To tame the unicorn and lion wild,
To mock the subtle in themselves beguiled,
  To cheer the ploughman with increaseful crops,
  And waste huge stones with little water-drops.

'Why work'st thou mischief in thy pilgrimage,
Unless thou couldst return to make amends?
One poor retiring minute in an age
Would purchase thee a thousand thousand friends,
Lending him wit that to bad debtors lends:
  O, this dread night, wouldst thou one hour
    come back,
  I could prevent this storm and shun thy wrack!

'Thou ceaseless lackey to eternity,
With some mischance cross Tarquin in his flight:
Devise extremes beyond extremity,
To make him curse this cursed crimeful night:
Let ghastly shadows his lewd eyes affright,
  And the dire thought of his committed evil
  Shape every bush a hideous shapeless devil.

'Disturb his hours of rest with restless trances,
Afflict him in his bed with bedrid groans;
Let there bechance him pitiful mischances,
To make him moan; but pity not his moans:
Stone him with harden'd hearts, harder than stones;

950. *springs*, saplings. 962. *retiring*, returning.

And let mild women to him lose their mildness,
Wilder to him than tigers in their wildness.

'Let him have time to tear his curled hair,
Let him have time against himself to rave,
Let him have time of Time's help to despair,
Let him have time to live a loathed slave,
Let him have time a beggar's orts to crave,
And time to see one that by alms doth live
Disdain to him disdained scraps to give.

'Let him have time to see his friends his foes,
And merry fools to mock at him resort;
Let him have time to mark how slow time goes
In time of sorrow, and how swift and short
His time of folly and his time of sport;
And ever let his unrecalling crime
Have time to wail th' abusing of his time.

'O Time, thou tutor both to good and bad,
Teach me to curse him that thou taught'st this ill!
At his own shadow let the thief run mad,
Himself himself seek every hour to kill!
Such wretched hands such wretched blood should spill;
For who so base would such an office have
As slanderous deathsman to so base a slave?

'The baser is he, coming from a king,
To shame his hope with deeds degenerate:
The mightier man, the mightier is the thing
That makes him honour'd, or begets him hate;
For greatest scandal waits on greatest state.
The moon being clouded presently is miss'd,
But little stars may hide them when they list.

985. *orts*, remnants.
993. *unrecalling*, which cannot be recalled.

'The crow may bathe his coal-black wings in mire,
And unperceived fly with the filth away;
But if the like the snow-white swan desire,
The stain upon his silver down will stay.
Poor grooms are sightless night, kings glorious day:
Gnats are unnoted wheresoe'er they fly,
But eagles gazed upon with every eye.

'Out, idle words, servants to shallow fools!
Unprofitable sounds, weak arbitrators!
Busy yourselves in skill-contending schools;
Debate where leisure serves with dull debaters;
To trembling clients be you mediators:
For me, I force not argument a straw,
Since that my case is past the help of law.

'In vain I rail at Opportunity,
At Time, at Tarquin, and uncheerful Night;
In vain I cavil with mine infamy,
In vain I spurn at my confirm'd despite:
This helpless smoke of words doth me no right.
The remedy indeed to do me good
Is to let forth my foul-defiled blood.

'Poor hand, why quiver'st thou at this decree?
Honour thyself to rid me of this shame;
For if I die, my honour lives in thee,
But if I live, thou livest in my defame:
Since thou couldst not defend thy loyal dame,
And wast afeard to scratch her wicked foe,
Kill both thyself and her for yielding so.'

This said, from her be-tumbled couch she starteth,
To find some desperate instrument of death:
But this no slaughterhouse no tool imparteth

1021. *force*, value.

To make more vent for passage of her breath;
Which, thronging through her lips, so vanisheth
As smoke from Ætna, that in air consumes,
Or that which from discharged cannon fumes.

'In vain,' quoth she, 'I live, and seek in vain
Some happy mean to end a hapless life.
I fear'd by Tarquin's falchion to be slain,
Yet for the self-same purpose seek a knife:
But when I fear'd I was a loyal wife:
So am I now: O no, that cannot be;
Of that true type hath Tarquin rifled me.

'O, that is gone for which I sought to live,
And therefore now I need not fear to die.
To clear this spot by death, at least I give
A badge of fame to slander's livery;
A dying life to living infamy:
Poor helpless help, the treasure stol'n away,
To burn the guiltless casket where it lay!

'Well, well, dear Collatine, thou shalt not know
The stained taste of violated troth;
I will not wrong thy true affection so,
To flatter thee with an infringed oath;
This bastard graff shall never come to growth:
He shall not boast who did thy stock pollute
That thou art doting father of his fruit.

'Nor shall he smile at thee in secret thought,
Nor laugh with his companions at thy state;
But thou shalt know thy interest was not bought
Basely with gold, but stol'n from forth thy gate.
For me, I am the mistress of my fate,
And with my trespass never will dispense,
Till life to death acquit my forced offence.

1054. *badge*, mark.

'I will not poison thee with my attaint,
Nor fold my fault in cleanly-coin'd excuses;
My sable ground of sin I will not paint,
To hide the truth of this false night's abuses:
My tongue shall utter all; mine eyes, like sluices,
As from a mountain-spring that feeds a dale,
Shall gush pure streams to purge my impure tale.'

By this, lamenting Philomel had ended
The well-tuned warble of her nightly sorrow,
And solemn night with slow sad gait descended
To ugly hell; when, lo, the blushing morrow
Lends light to all fair eyes that light will borrow:
But cloudy Lucrece shames herself to see,
And therefore still in night would cloister'd be.

Revealing day through every cranny spies,
And seems to point her out where she sits weeping;
To whom she sobbing speaks: 'O eye of eyes,
Why pry'st thou through my window? leave thy peeping:
Mock with thy tickling beams eyes that are sleeping:
Brand not my forehead with thy piercing light,
For day hath nought to do what 's done by night.'

Thus cavils she with every thing she sees:
True grief is fond and testy as a child,
Who wayward once, his mood with nought agrees:
Old woes, not infant sorrows, bear them mild;
Continuance tames the one; the other wild,
Like an unpractised swimmer plunging still,
With too much labour drowns for want of skill.

1084. *cloudy*, sorrowful.

So she, deep-drenched in a sea of care,
Holds disputation with each thing she views,
And to herself all sorrow doth compare;
No object but her passions strength renews;
And as one shifts, another straight ensues:
  Sometime her grief is dumb and hath no words;
  Sometime 'tis mad and too much talk affords.

The little birds that tune their morning's joy
Make her moans mad with their sweet melody:
For mirth doth search the bottom of annoy;
Sad souls are slain in merry company;
Grief best is pleased with grief's society:
  True sorrow then is feelingly sufficed
  When with like semblance it is sympathized.

'Tis double death to drown in ken of shore;
He ten times pines that pines beholding food;
To see the salve doth make the wound ache more;
Great grief grieves most at that would do it good;
Deep woes roll forward like a gentle flood,
  Who, being stopp'd, the bounding banks o'erflows;
  Grief dallied with nor law nor limit knows.

'You mocking birds,' quoth she, 'your tunes entomb
Within your hollow-swelling feather'd breasts,
And in my hearing be you mute and dumb:
My restless discord loves no stops nor rests;
A woeful hostess brooks not merry guests:
  Relish your nimble notes to pleasing ears;
  Distress likes dumps when time is kept with tears.

'Come, Philomel, that sing'st of ravishment,
Make thy sad grove in my dishevell'd hair:
As the dank earth weeps at thy languishment,

So I at each sad strain will strain a tear,
And with deep groans the diapason bear;
For burden-wise I 'll hum on Tarquin still,
While thou on Tereus descant'st better skill.

'And whiles against a thorn thou bear'st thy part,
To keep thy sharp woes waking, wretched I,
To imitate thee well, against my heart
Will fix a sharp knife to affright mine eye;
Who, if it wink, shall thereon fall and die.
These means, as frets upon an instrument,
Shall tune our heart-strings to true languishment.

'And for, poor bird, thou sing'st not in the day,
As shaming any eye should thee behold,
Some dark deep desert, seated from the way,
That knows not parching heat nor freezing cold,
Will we find out; and there we will unfold
To creatures stern sad tunes, to change their kinds:
Since men prove beasts, let beasts bear gentle minds.'

As the poor frighted deer, that stands at gaze,
Wildly determining which way to fly,
Or one encompass'd with a winding maze,
That cannot tread the way out readily;
So with herself is she in mutiny,
To live or die which of the twain were better,
When life is shamed, and death reproach's debtor.

'To kill myself,' quoth she, 'alack, what were it,
But with my body my poor soul's pollution?
They that lose half with greater patience bear it

1132. *diapason*, harmonious bass accompaniment.
1134. *descant'st better skill*, singest more skilfully.
1140. *frets*, stops regulating the strings' vibrations.

Than they whose whole is swallow'd in confusion.
That mother tries a merciless conclusion
Who, having two sweet babes, when death takes one,
Will slay the other and be nurse to none.

'My body or my soul, which was the dearer,
When the one pure, the other made divine?
Whose love of either to myself was nearer,
When both were kept for heaven and Collatine?
Ay me! the bark peel'd from the lofty pine,
His leaves will wither and his sap decay;
So must my soul, her bark being peel'd away.

'Her house is sack'd, her quiet interrupted,
Her mansion batter'd by the enemy;
Her sacred temple spotted, spoil'd, corrupted,
Grossly engirt with daring infamy:
Then let it not be call'd impiety,
If in this blemish'd fort I make some hole
Through which I may convey this troubled soul.

'Yet die I will not till my Collatine
Have heard the cause of my untimely death;
That he may vow, in that sad hour of mine,
Revenge on him that made me stop my breath.
My stained blood to Tarquin I 'll bequeath,
Which by him tainted shall for him be spent,
And as his due writ in my testament.

'My honour I 'll bequeath unto the knife
That wounds my body so dishonoured.
'Tis honour to deprive dishonour'd life;
The one will live, the other being dead:
So of shame's ashes shall my fame be bred;
For in my death I murder shameful scorn:
My shame so dead, mine honour is new-born.

'Dear lord of that dear jewel I have lost,
What legacy shall I bequeath to thee?
My resolution, love, shall be thy boast,
By whose example thou revenged mayst be.
How Tarquin must be used, read it in me:
Myself, thy friend, will kill myself, thy foe,
And for my sake serve thou false Tarquin so.

'This brief abridgement of my will I make:
My soul and body to the skies and ground;
My resolution, husband, do thou take;
Mine honour be the knife's that makes my wound;
My shame be his that did my fame confound;
And all my fame that lives disbursed be
To those that live, and think no shame of me.

'Thou, Collatine, shalt oversee this will;
How was I overseen that thou shalt see it!
My blood shall wash the slander of mine ill;
My life's foul deed, my life's fair end shall free it.
Faint not, faint heart, but stoutly say "So be it:"
Yield to my hand; my hand shall conquer thee:
Thou dead, both die, and both shall victors be.'

This plot of death when sadly she had laid,
And wiped the brinish pearl from her bright eyes,
With untuned tongue she hoarsely calls her maid,
Whose swift obedience to her mistress hies;
For fleet-wing'd duty with thought's feathers flies.
Poor Lucrece' cheeks unto her maid seem so
As winter meads when sun doth melt their snow.

Her mistress she doth give demure good-morrow,
With soft-slow tongue, true mark of modesty,
And sorts a sad look to her lady's sorrow,

1206. *overseen*, beguiled, disabled. 1221. *sorts*, suits.

For why her face wore sorrow's livery;
But durst not ask of her audaciously
  Why her two suns were cloud-eclipsed so,
  Nor why her fair cheeks over-wash'd with woe

But as the earth doth weep, the sun being set,
Each flower moisten'd like a melting eye,
Even so the maid with swelling drops gan wet
Her circled eyne, enforced by sympathy
Of those fair suns set in her mistress' sky,
  Who in a salt-waved ocean quench their light,
  Which makes the maid weep like the dewy night.

A pretty while these pretty creatures stand,
Like ivory conduits coral cisterns filling:
One justly weeps; the other takes in hand
No cause, but company, of her drops spilling:
Their gentle sex to weep are often willing;
  Grieving themselves to guess at others' smarts,
  And then they drown their eyes or break their hearts.

For men have marble, women waxen, minds,
And therefore are they form'd as marble will;
The weak oppress'd, the impression of strange kinds
Is form'd in them by force, by fraud, or skill:
Then call them not the authors of their ill,
  No more than wax shall be accounted evil
  Wherein is stamp'd the semblance of a devil.

Their smoothness, like a goodly champaign plain,
Lays open all the little worms that creep;
In men, as in a rough-grown grove, remain
Cave-keeping evils that obscurely sleep:
Through crystal walls each little mote will peep:
  Though men can cover crimes with bold stern looks,
  Poor women's faces are their own faults' books.

No man inveigh against the wither'd flower,
But chide rough winter that the flower hath kill'd:
Not that devour'd, but that which doth devour,
Is worthy blame. O, let it not be hild
Poor women's faults, that they are so fulfill'd
With men's abuses: those proud lords, to blame
Make weak-made women tenants to their shame.

The precedent whereof in Lucrece view,
Assail'd by night with circumstances strong
Of present death, and shame that might ensue
By that her death, to do her husband wrong:
Such danger to resistance did belong,
That dying fear through all her body spread;
And who cannot abuse a body dead?

By this, mild patience bid fair Lucrece speak
To the poor counterfeit of her complaining:
'My girl,' quoth she, 'on what occasion break
Those tears from thee, that down thy cheeks are raining?
If thou dost weep for grief of my sustaining,
Know, gentle wench, it small avails my mood:
If tears could help, mine own would do me good.

'But tell me, girl, when went'—and there she stay'd
Till after a deep groan—'Tarquin from hence?'
'Madam, ere I was up,' replied the maid,
'The more to blame my sluggard negligence:
Yet with the fault I thus far can dispense;
Myself was stirring ere the break of day,
And, ere I rose, was Tarquin gone away.

'But, lady, if your maid may be so bold,
She would request to know your heaviness.'

1257. *hild*, held.

'O, peace!' quoth Lucrece: 'if it should be told,
The repetition cannot make it less;
For more it is than I can well express:
And that deep torture may be call'd a hell
When more is felt than one hath power to tell.

'Go, get me hither paper, ink, and pen:
Yet save that labour, for I have them here.
What should I say? One of my husband's men
Bid thou be ready, by and by, to bear
A letter to my lord, my love, my dear:
Bid him with speed prepare to carry it;
The cause craves haste, and it will soon be writ.'

Her maid is gone, and she prepares to write,
First hovering o'er the paper with her quill:
Conceit and grief an eager combat fight;
What wit sets down is blotted straight with will;
This is too curious-good, this blunt and ill:
Much like a press of people at a door,
Throng her inventions, which shall go before.

At last she thus begins: 'Thou worthy lord
Of that unworthy wife that greeteth thee,
Health to thy person! next vouchsafe t' afford—
If ever, love, thy Lucrece thou wilt see—
Some present speed to come and visit me.
So, I commend me from our house in grief:
My woes are tedious, though my words are brief.'

Here folds she up the tenour of her woe,
Her certain sorrow writ uncertainly.
By this short schedule Collatine may know
Her grief, but not her grief's true quality:
She dares not thereof make discovery,
Lest he should hold it her own gross abuse,
Ere she with blood had stain'd her stain'd excuse.

Besides, the life and feeling of her passion
She hoards, to spend when he is by to hear her,
When sighs and groans and tears may grace the fashion
Of her disgrace, the better so to clear her
From that suspicion which the world might bear her.
To shun this blot, she would not blot the letter
With words, till action might become them better.

To see sad sights moves more than hear them told;
For then the eye interprets to the ear
The heavy motion that it doth behold,
When every part a part of woe doth bear.
'Tis but a part of sorrow that we hear:
Deep sounds make lesser noise than shallow fords,
And sorrow ebbs, being blown with wind of words.

Her letter now is seal'd, and on it writ
'At Ardea to my lord with more than haste.'
The post attends, and she delivers it,
Charging the sour-faced groom to hie as fast
As lagging fowls before the northern blast:
Speed more than speed but dull and slow she deems:
Extremity still urgeth such extremes.

The homely villain court'sies to her low,
And, blushing on her, with a steadfast eye
Receives the scroll without or yea or no,
And forth with bashful innocence doth hie.
But they whose guilt within their bosoms lie
Imagine every eye beholds their blame;
For Lucrece thought he blush'd to see her shame

1338. *villain*, rustic.

When, silly groom! God wot, it was defect
Of spirit, life, and bold audacity.
Such harmless creatures have a true respect
To talk in deeds, while others saucily
Promise more speed, but do it leisurely:
Even so this pattern of the worn-out age
Pawn'd honest looks, but laid no words to gage.

His kindled duty kindled her mistrust,
That two red fires in both their faces blazed;
She thought he blush'd, as knowing Tarquin's lust,
And, blushing with him, wistly on him gazed;
Her earnest eye did make him more amazed:
The more she saw the blood his cheeks replenish,
The more she thought he spied in her some blemish.

But long she thinks till he return again,
And yet the duteous vassal scarce is gone.
The weary time she cannot entertain,
For now 'tis stale to sigh, to weep, and groan:
So woe hath wearied woe, moan tired moan,
That she her plaints a little while doth stay,
Pausing for means to mourn some newer way.

At last she calls to mind where hangs a piece
Of skilful painting, made for Priam's Troy;
Before the which is drawn the power of Greece,
For Helen's rape the city to destroy,
Threatening cloud-kissing Ilion with annoy;
Which the conceited painter drew so proud,
As heaven, it seem'd, to kiss the turrets bow'd.

A thousand lamentable objects there,
In scorn of nature, art gave lifeless life:
Many a dry drop seem'd a weeping tear,

Shed for the slaughter'd husband by the wife:
The red blood reek'd, to show the painter's strife;
And dying eyes gleam'd forth their ashy lights,
Like dying coals burnt out in tedious nights.

There might you see the labouring pioner
Begrimed with sweat, and smeared all with dust;
And from the towers of Troy there would appear
The very eyes of men through loop-holes thrust,
Gazing upon the Greeks with little lust:
Such sweet observance in this work was had,
That one might see those far-off eyes look sad.

In great commanders grace and majesty
You might behold, triúmphing in their faces,
In youth, quick bearing and dexterity;
And here and there the painter interlaces
Pale cowards, marching on with trembling paces;
Which heartless peasants did so well resemble,
That one would swear he saw them quake and tremble.

In Ajax and Ulysses, O, what art
Of physiognomy might one behold!
The face of either cipher'd either's heart;
Their face their manners most expressly told:
In Ajax' eyes blunt rage and rigour roll'd;
But the mild glance that sly Ulysses lent
Show'd deep regard and smiling government

There pleading might you see grave Nestor stand,
As 'twere encouraging the Greeks to fight;
Making such sober action with his hand,
That it beguiled attention, charm'd the sight:
In speech, it seem'd, his beard, all silver white,

1380. *pioner*, sapper.

Wagg'd up and down, and from his lips did fly
Thin winding breath, which purl'd up to the sky.

About him were a press of gaping faces,
Which seem'd to swallow up his sound advice;
All jointly listening, but with several graces,
As if some mermaid did their ears entice,
Some high, some low, the painter was so nice;
The scalps of many, almost hid behind,
To jump up higher seem'd, to mock the mind.

Here one man's hand lean'd on another's head,
His nose being shadow'd by his neighbour's ear;
Here one being throng'd bears back, all boll'n and red;
Another smother'd seems to pelt and swear;
And in their rage such signs of rage they bear,
As, but for loss of Nestor's golden words,
It seem'd they would debate with angry swords.

For much imaginary work was there;
Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind,
That for Achilles' image stood his spear,
Griped in an armed hand; himself, behind,
Was left unseen, save to the eye of mind:
A hand, a foot, a face, a leg, a head,
Stood for the whole to be imagined.

And from the walls of strong-besieged Troy
When their brave hope, bold Hector, march'd to field,
Stood many Trojan mothers, sharing joy
To see their youthful sons bright weapons wield;
And to their hope they such odd action yield,

1412. *nice*, precise, refined.
1417. *boll'n*, swelled.
1418. *pelt*, rage.
1423. *Conceit*, imagination.

That through their light joy seemed to appear,
Like bright things stain'd, a kind of heavy fear.

And from the strand of Dardan, where they fought,
To Simois' reedy banks the red blood ran,
Whose waves to imitate the battle sought
With swelling ridges; and their ranks began
To break upon the galled shore, and than
Retire again, till, meeting greater ranks,
They join and shoot their foam at Simois' banks.

To this well-painted piece is Lucrece come,
To find a face where all distress is stell'd.
Many she sees where cares have carved some,
But none where all distress and dolour dwell'd,
Till she despairing Hecuba beheld,
Staring on Priam's wounds with her old eyes,
Which bleeding under Pyrrhus' proud foot lies.

In her the painter had anatomized
Time's ruin, beauty's wreck, and grim care's reign:
Her cheeks with chaps and wrinkles were disguised;
Of what she was no semblance did remain:
Her blue blood changed to black in every vein,
Wanting the spring that those shrunk pipes had fed,
Show'd life imprison'd in a body dead.

On this sad shadow Lucrece spends her eyes,
And shapes her sorrow to the beldam's woes,
Who nothing wants to answer her but cries,
And bitter words to ban her cruel foes:
The painter was no god to lend her those;
And therefore Lucrece swears he did her wrong,
To give her so much grief and not a tongue.

1440. *than*, then. 1444. *stell'd*, planted, set.
1450. *anatomized*, laid bare.

'Poor instrument,' quoth she, 'without a sound,
I 'll tune thy woes with my lamenting tongue,
And drop sweet balm in Priam's painted wound,
And rail on Pyrrhus that hath done him wrong,
And with my tears quench Troy that burns so long,
And with my knife scratch out the angry eyes
Of all the Greeks that are thine enemies.

'Show me the strumpet that began this stir,
That with my nails her beauty I may tear.
Thy heat of lust, fond Paris, did incur
This load of wrath that burning Troy doth bear:
Thy eye kindled the fire that burneth here;
And here in Troy, for trespass of thine eye,
The sire, the son, the dame, and daughter die.

'Why should the private pleasure of some one
Become the public plague of many moe?
Let sin, alone committed, light alone
Upon his head that hath transgressed so;
Let guiltless souls be freed from guilty woe:
For one's offence why should so many fall,
To plague a private sin in general?

'Lo, here weeps Hecuba, here Priam dies,
Here manly Hector faints, here Troilus swounds,
Here friend by friend in bloody channel lies,
And friend to friend gives unadvised wounds,
And one man's lust these many lives confounds:
Had doting Priam check'd his son's desire,
Troy had been bright with fame and not with fire.'

Here feelingly she weeps Troy's painted woes:
For sorrow, like a heavy-hanging bell,
Once set on ringing, with his own weight goes;

1487. *channel*, kennel, gutter. 1488. *unadvised*, involuntary.

Then little strength rings out the doleful knell:
So Lucrece, set a-work, sad tales doth tell
To pencill'd pensiveness and colour'd sorrow;
She lends them words, and she their looks doth borrow.

She throws her eyes about the painting round,
And whom she finds forlorn she doth lament.
At last she sees a wretched image bound,
That piteous looks to Phrygian shepherds lent:
His face, though full of cares, yet show'd content;
Onward to Troy with the blunt swains he goes,
So mild, that Patience seem'd to scorn his woes.

In him the painter labour'd with his skill
To hide deceit, and give the harmless show
An humble gait, calm looks, eyes wailing still,
A brow unbent, that seem'd to welcome woe;
Cheeks neither red nor pale, but mingled so
That blushing red no guilty instance gave,
Nor ashy pale the fear that false hearts have.

But, like a constant and confirmed devil,
He entertain'd a show so seeming just,
And therein so ensconced his secret evil,
That jealousy itself could not mistrust
False-creeping craft and perjury should thrust
Into so bright a day such black-faced storms,
Or blot with hell-born sin such saint-like forms.

The well-skill'd workman this mild image drew
For perjured Sinon, whose enchanting story
The credulous old Priam after slew;
Whose words like wildfire burnt the shining glory
Of rich-built Ilion, that the skies were sorry,

1511. *guilty instance*, evidence of guilt.

And little stars shot from their fixed places,
When their glass fell wherein they view'd their faces.

This picture she advisedly perused,
And chid the painter for his wondrous skill,
Saying, some shape in Sinon's was abused;
So fair a form lodged not a mind so ill:
And still on him she gazed; and gazing still,
Such signs of truth in his plain face she spied,
That she concludes the picture was belied.

'It cannot be,' quoth she, 'that so much guile'—
She would have said 'can lurk in such a look;'
But Tarquin's shape came in her mind the while,
And from her tongue 'can lurk' from 'cannot' took:
'It cannot be' she in that sense forsook,
And turn'd it thus, 'It cannot be, I find,
But such a face should bear a wicked mind:

'For even as subtle Sinon here is painted,
So sober-sad, so weary, and so mild,
As if with grief or travail he had fainted,
To me came Tarquin armed; so beguiled
With outward honesty, but yet defiled
With inward vice: as Priam him did cherish,
So did I Tarquin; so my Troy did perish.

'Look, look, how listening Priam wets his eyes,
To see those borrow'd tears that Sinon sheds!
Priam, why art thou old and yet not wise?
For every tear he falls a Trojan bleeds:
His eye drops fire, no water thence proceeds;

1551. *falls*, drops.

Those round clear pearls of his, that move thy pity,
Are balls of quenchless fire to burn thy city.

'Such devils steal effects from lightless hell;
For Sinon in his fire doth quake with cold,
And in that cold hot-burning fire doth dwell;
These contraries such unity do hold,
Only to flatter fools and make them bold:
So Priam's trust false Sinon's tears doth flatter,
That he finds means to burn his Troy with water.'

Here, all enraged, such passion her assails,
That patience is quite beaten from her breast.
She tears the senseless Sinon with her nails,
Comparing him to that unhappy guest
Whose deed hath made herself herself detest:
At last she smilingly with this gives o'er;
'Fool, fool!' quoth she, 'his wounds will not be sore.'

Thus ebbs and flows the current of her sorrow,
And time doth weary time with her complaining.
She looks for night, and then she longs for morrow,
And both she thinks too long with her remaining:
Short time seems long in sorrow's sharp sustaining:
Though woe be heavy, yet it seldom sleeps,
And they that watch see time how slow it creeps.

Which all this time hath overslipp'd her thought,
That she with painted images hath spent;
Being from the feeling of her own grief brought
By deep surmise of others' detriment,
Losing her woes in shows of discontent.
It easeth some, though none it ever cured,
To think their dolour others have endured.

But now the mindful messenger come back,
Brings home his lord and other company;
Who finds his Lucrece clad in mourning black:
And round about her tear-distained eye
Blue circles stream'd, like rainbows in the sky:
These water-galls in her dim element
Foretell new storms to those already spent.

Which when her sad-beholding husband saw,
Amazedly in her sad face he stares:
Her eyes, though sod in tears, look'd red and raw,
Her lively colour kill'd with deadly cares.
He hath no power to ask her how she fares:
Both stood, like old acquaintance in a trance,
Met far from home, wondering each other's chance.

At last he takes her by the bloodless hand,
And thus begins: 'What uncouth ill event
Hath thee befall'n, that thou dost trembling stand?
Sweet love, what spite hath thy fair colour spent?
Why art thou thus attired in discontent?
Unmask, dear dear, this moody heaviness,
And tell thy grief, that we may give redress.'

Three times with sighs she gives her sorrow fire,
Ere once she can discharge one word of woe:
At length address'd to answer his desire,
She modestly prepares to let them know
Her honour is ta'en prisoner by the foe;
While Collatine and his consorted lords
With sad attention long to hear her words.

1588. *water-galls*, rainbows. meaning probably influenced by
1600. *spent*, put out (the Ital. 'spento').

And now this pale swan in her watery nest
Begins the sad dirge of her certain ending:
'Few words,' quoth she, 'shall fit the trespass best,
Where no excuse can give the fault amending:
In me moe woes than words are now depending;
And my laments would be drawn out too long,
To tell them all with one poor tired tongue.

'Then be this all the task it hath to say:
Dear husband, in the interest of thy bed
A stranger came, and on that pillow lay
Where thou wast wont to rest thy weary head;
And what wrong else may be imagined
By foul enforcement might be done to me,
From that, alas, thy Lucrece is not free.

'For in the dreadful dead of dark midnight,
With shining falchion in my chamber came
A creeping creature, with a flaming light,
And softly cried "Awake, thou Roman dame,
And entertain my love; else lasting shame
On thee and thine this night I will inflict,
If thou my love's desire do contradict.

'"For some hard-favour'd groom of thine," quoth he,
"Unless thou yoke thy liking to my will,
I'll murder straight, and then I'll slaughter thee
And swear I found you where you did fulfil
The loathsome act of lust, and so did kill
The lechers in their deed: this act will be
My fame and thy perpetual infamy."

'With this, I did begin to start and cry;
And then against my heart he sets his sword,
Swearing, unless I took all patiently,

1615. *depending*, impending.
1619. *in the interest*, into the usufruct or enjoyment.

I should not live to speak another word;
So should my shame still rest upon record,
And never be forgot in mighty Rome
Th' adulterate death of Lucrece and her groom.

'Mine enemy was strong, my poor self weak,
And far the weaker with so strong a fear:
My bloody judge forbade my tongue to speak;
No rightful plea might plead for justice there:
His scarlet lust came evidence to swear
That my poor beauty had purloin'd his eyes;
And when the judge is robb'd the prisoner dies.

'O, teach me how to make mine own excuse!
Or at the least this refuge let me find;
Though my gross blood be stain'd with this abuse,
Immaculate and spotless is my mind;
That was not forced; that never was inclined
To accessary yieldings, but still pure
Doth in her poison'd closet yet endure.'

Lo, here, the hopeless merchant of this loss,
With head declined, and voice damm'd up with woe,
With sad set eyes, and wretched arms across,
From lips new-waxen pale begins to blow
The grief away that stops his answer so:
But, wretched as he is, he strives in vain;
What he breathes out his breath drinks up again.

As through an arch the violent roaring tide
Outruns the eye that doth behold his haste,
Yet in the eddy boundeth in his pride
Back to the strait that forced him on so fast,
In rage sent out, recall'd in rage, being past:
Even so his sighs, his sorrows, make a saw,
To push grief on, and back the same grief draw.

Which speechless woe of his poor she attendeth,
And his untimely frenzy thus awaketh:
'Dear lord, thy sorrow to my sorrow lendeth
Another power; no flood by raining slaketh.
My woe too sensible thy passion maketh
More feeling-painful: let it then suffice
To drown one woe, one pair of weeping eyes.

'And for my sake, when I might charm thee so
For she that was thy Lucrece, now attend me:
Be suddenly revenged on my foe,
Thine, mine, his own: suppose thou dost defend me
From what is past: the help that thou shalt lend me
Comes all too late, yet let the traitor die;
For sparing justice feeds iniquity.

'But ere I name him, you fair lords,' quoth she,
Speaking to those that came with Collatine,
'Shall plight your honourable faiths to me,
With swift pursuit to venge this wrong of mine;
For 'tis a meritorious fair design
To chase injustice with revengeful arms:
Knights, by their oaths, should right poor ladies' harms.'

At this request, with noble disposition
Each present lord began to promise aid,
As bound in knighthood to her imposition,
Longing to hear the hateful foe bewray'd.
But she, that yet her sad task hath not said,
The protestation stops. 'O, speak,' quoth she,
'How may this forced stain be wiped from me?

'What is the quality of mine offence,
Being constrain'd with dreadful circumstance?
May my pure mind with the foul act dispense,

1704. *dispense* (*with*), excuse.

My low-declined honour to advance?
May any terms acquit me from this chance?
The poison'd fountain clears itself again;
And why not I from this compelled stain?'

With this, they all at once began to say,
Her body's stain her mind untainted clears;
While with a joyless smile she turns away
The face, that map which deep impression bears
Of hard misfortune, carved in it with tears.
'No, no,' quoth she, 'no dame, hereafter living,
By my excuse shall claim excuse's giving.'

Here with a sigh, as if her heart would break,
She throws forth Tarquin's name: 'He, he,' she says,
But more than 'he' her poor tongue could not speak;
Till after many accents and delays,
Untimely breathings, sick and short assays,
She utters this: 'He, he, fair lords, 'tis he,
That guides this hand to give this wound to me.'

Even here she sheathed in her harmless breast
A harmful knife, that thence her soul unsheathed:
That blow did bail it from the deep unrest
Of that polluted prison where it breathed:
Her contrite sighs unto the clouds bequeathed
Her winged sprite, and through her wounds doth fly
Life's lasting date from cancell'd destiny.

Stone-still, astonish'd with this deadly deed,
Stood Collatine and all his lordly crew;
Till Lucrece' father, that beholds her bleed,

1720. *assays*, efforts. 1729. *date*, period.

Himself on her self-slaughter'd body threw;
And from the purple fountain Brutus drew
The murderous knife, and, as it left the place,
Her blood, in poor revenge, held it in chase;

And bubbling from her breast, it doth divide
In two slow rivers, that the crimson blood
Circles her body in on every side,
Who, like a late-sack'd island, vastly stood
Bare and unpeopled in this fearful flood.
Some of her blood still pure and red remain'd,
And some look'd black, and that false Tarquin stain'd.

About the mourning and congealed face
Of that black blood a watery rigol goes,
Which seems to weep upon the tainted place:
And ever since, as pitying Lucrece' woes,
Corrupted blood some watery token shows;
And blood untainted still doth red abide,
Blushing at that which is so putrified.

'Daughter, dear daughter,' old Lucretius cries,
'That life was mine which thou hast here deprived.
If in the child the father's image lies,
Where shall I live now Lucrece is unlived?
Thou wast not to this end from me derived.
If children pre-decease progenitors,
We are their offspring, and they none of ours.

1734. *Brutus*, Lucius Junius Brutus, whose father and elder brother were murdered by Tarquinius Superbus, and who, to escape a like fate, feigned insanity; whence his cognomen.

1740. *vastly*, desolate.

1745. *rigol*, circle.

1752. *deprived*, taken away.

'Poor broken glass, I often did behold
In thy sweet semblance my old age new born;
But now that fair fresh mirror, dim and old,
Shows me a bare-boned death by time outworn:
O, from thy cheeks my image thou hast torn,
And shiver'd all the beauty of my glass,
That I no more can see what once I was!

'O time, cease thou thy course and last no longer,
If they surcease to be that should survive.
Shall rotten death make conquest of the stronger
And leave the faltering feeble souls alive?
The old bees die, the young possess their hive:
Then live, sweet Lucrece, live again and see
Thy father die, and not thy father thee!'

By this, starts Collatine as from a dream,
And bids Lucretius give his sorrow place;
And then in key-cold Lucrece' bleeding stream
He falls, and bathes the pale fear in his face,
And counterfeits to die with her a space;
Till manly shame bids him possess his breath
And live to be revenged on her death.

The deep vexation of his inward soul
Hath served a dumb arrest upon his tongue;
Who, mad that sorrow should his use control,
Or keep him from heart-easing words so long,
Begins to talk; but through his lips do throng
Weak words, so thick come in his poor heart's aid,
That no man could distinguish what he said.

Yet sometime 'Tarquin' was pronounced plain,
But through his teeth, as if the name he tore.
This windy tempest, till it blow up rain,

Held back his sorrow's tide, to make it more;
At last it rains, and busy winds give o'er:
Then son and father weep with equal strife
Who should weep most, for daughter or for wife.

The one doth call her his, the other his,
Yet neither may possess the claim they lay.
The father says 'She 's mine.' 'O, mine she is,'
Replies her husband: 'do not take away
My sorrow's interest; let no mourner say
He weeps for her, for she was only mine,
And only must be wail'd by Collatine.'

'O,' quoth Lucretius, 'I did give that life
Which she too early and too late hath spill'd.'
'Woe, woe,' quoth Collatine, 'she was my wife;
I owed her, and 'tis mine that she hath kill'd.'
'My daughter' and 'my wife' with clamours fill'd
The dispersed air, who, holding Lucrece' life,
Answer'd their cries, 'my daughter' and 'my wife.'

Brutus, who pluck'd the knife from Lucrece' side,
Seeing such emulation in their woe,
Began to clothe his wit in state and pride,
Burying in Lucrece' wound his folly's show.
He with the Romans was esteemed so
As silly-jeering idiots are with kings,
For sportive words and uttering foolish things:

But now he throws that shallow habit by,
Wherein deep policy did him disguise;
And arm'd his long-hid wits advisedly,
To check the tears in Collatinus' eyes.
'Thou wronged lord of Rome,' quoth he, 'arise;

Let my unsounded self, supposed a fool,
Now set thy long-experienced wit to school.

'Why, Collatine, is woe the cure for woe?
Do wounds help wounds, or grief help grievous deeds?
Is it revenge to give thyself a blow
For his foul act by whom thy fair wife bleeds?
Such childish humour from weak minds proceeds:
Thy wretched wife mistook the matter so,
To slay herself, that should have slain her foe.

'Courageous Roman, do not steep thy heart
In such relenting dew of lamentations,
But kneel with me and help to bear thy part,
To rouse our Roman gods with invocations,
That they will suffer these abominations,
Since Rome herself in them doth stand disgraced,
By our strong arms from forth her fair streets chased.

'Now, by the Capitol that we adore,
And by this chaste blood so unjustly stain'd,
By heaven's fair sun that breeds the fat earth's store,
By all our country rights in Rome maintain'd,
And by chaste Lucrece' soul that late complain'd
Her wrongs to us, and by this bloody knife,
We will revenge the death of this true wife.'

This said, he struck his hand upon his breast,
And kiss'd the fatal knife, to end his vow,
And to his protestation urged the rest,
Who, wondering at him, did his words allow:
Then jointly to the ground their knees they bow;

1819. *unsounded*, unexplored. 1845. *allow*, approve.

And that deep vow, which Brutus made before,
He doth again repeat, and that they swore.

When they had sworn to this advised doom,
They did conclude to bear dead Lucrece thence;
To show her bleeding body thorough Rome,
And so to publish Tarquin's foul offence:
Which being done with speedy diligence,
The Romans plausibly did give consent
To Tarquin's everlasting banishment.

1854. *plausibly*, willingly.

SONNETS

INTRODUCTION

SHAKESPEARE'S Sonnets were first printed in 1609, with the following title-page :—

SHAKE-SPEARE'S—SONNETS. | Neuer before Imprinted. | AT LONDON. | By *G. Eld* for *T. T.*, and are | to be solde by *William Aspley*. | 1609. |

In some copies 'John Wright, dwelling at Christchurch gate,' is named as the seller.

At the end of the Sonnets was printed A LOVER'S COMPLAINT.

In 1640 the great majority of the Sonnets were reissued (together with some of the poems from *The Passionate Pilgrim* and *A Lover's Complaint* and some pieces not by Shakespeare) in a volume entitled :—

POEMS : | WRITTEN | BY | WIL. SHAKE-SPEARE | Gent. | Printed at *London* by *Tho. Cotes*, and are | to be sold by *John Benson*, dwelling in | St *Dunstans* Churchyard. 1640.

The order of the Sonnets is here arbitrary, and Nos. XVIII, XIX, XLIII, LVI, LXXV, LXXVI, XCVI, and CXXVI are omitted. The eighteenth-century editors, Gildon (1710), Sewell (1725), Ewing (1771), and Evans (1775), followed this order.

Of definite chronological data we have two only.

(i) *The Passionate Pilgrim*, published in 1599, contained, with trifling variations, the two Sonnets CXXXVIII and CXLIV.

(ii) Meres, in 1598, mentioned, as already familiar and celebrated, Shakespeare's 'sugred sonnets among his private friends.'

Love's Labour's Lost, published in the same year, contained two Sonnets, and *Romeo and Juliet* (pr. 1597) a third; none of these, however, appear in the collection of 1609.

All that can be inferred from these facts is that Shakespeare had written some sonnets by 1598.

Attempts have been made to supplement this very inadequate conclusion by inferences, more or less plausible, from particular passages. Thus (1) CVII 5, 'The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,' has been variously understood of the peace of Vervins in 1598, of the Essex plot against Elizabeth (1601), and of Elizabeth's death. Mr. Lee's parallels from her obituary literature leave little doubt that the last was the event referred to. (2) The reiterated declaration in CII f. that 'three years' had passed since the beginning of the friendship, and thus of the sonnet sequence itself, if we may accept it literally, in so far narrows the limits of possible date. (3) An allusion in the *Avisa* of Henry Willobie (1594) to a familiar friend of his, one 'W. S.,' as having 'not long before tried the courtesy of a like passion' [*i.e.* suffered from the cruelty of a mistress], and 'now newly recovered of the like infection,' has been thought to refer to Shakespeare and to the love-adventure which some of them reflect. This passage would go far to show that the passion of the sonnets sprang more from Shakespeare's imagination than from his heart, had we any definite ground for identifying 'W. S.' with Shakespeare. But it is impossible to draw any inference from grounds so slight. (5) Numerous affinities of style and thought connect the Sonnets with the Poems and with a group of plays which can

be approximately dated. From 1590-97, Shakespeare's dramatic writing was influenced by lyric ideals of style, predominating in *Love's Labour 's Lost*, the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. From 1597, this style rapidly gave way to the more nervous and masculine speech of the later Histories and Comedies. There is a strong presumption that the Sonnets—Shakespeare's consummate achievement in lyric poetry—belong to this period of pronounced lyrical energies. In particular, Sonnets I-XXVI have unmistakable affinities of style and motive with the *Venus and Adonis*.

The first publisher of the Sonnets printed them, as such collections were commonly printed, in a continuous series, without any outward marks either of connexion or of division. Some critics have supposed the sequence to be wholly arbitrary. But it is clear that there is at least one definite division, at CXXVI. All the Sonnets up to that point are addressed to a youth. Of the remaining twenty-eight, seventeen are addressed to the poet's mistress, and the majority of the rest utter his bitter reflections upon the fatuous passion she has inspired. The fundamental situation is put with the utmost trenchancy in CXLIV :—

> Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
> Which like two spirits do suggest me still:
> The better angel is a man right fair,
> The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.

The love of the 'worser spirit' is a love of despair, and the Sonnets inspired by it have a tragic intensity absent from the most despondent of the Sonnets of 'comfort.' The poet loves in spite of his best self, and his intellect is divorced from his love instead of, as in the finest of the earlier series, seeing with

love's eyes and finding in it and through it 'the meaning of all things that are.' Within a smaller compass it strikes more various notes. As it stands it seems devoid of continuity. Its fitful arrangement and spasmodic movement may be partly due to disturbance of the original order; as where two half-playful pieces, CXXVIII and CXXX, are interrupted by the stern solemnity of CXXIX; but it seems rather to reflect the tumult of impulses evoked by a passion in its nature anarchical.

In the first series, on the other hand, a certain continuity is unmistakable, and it is of a kind not at all suggestive of the editorial hand.[1] The Sonnets form a succession of groups, some of which were probably continuous poetic epistles, closed with an 'envoy' (cf. XXXII, LV, LXXV, XCVI). The order of the several groups also seems by no means arbitrary. Displacement may be here and there suspected;[2] but on the whole they form a connected sequence, passing by delicate gradations through a rich compass of emotion.

The Sonnets of the opening group (I-XIV) betray the admirer rather than the friend. Their theme accords with their less personal tone. It is not so much in the interest of 'the man right fair' as of the beauty which he 'holds in lease' (XIII) that he bids

[1] Mr. Lee stands alone among recent critics of weight in disputing this. 'If the critical ingenuity,' he declares, 'which has detected a continuous thread of narrative in the order that Thorpe printed Shakespeare's Sonnets were applied to the booksellers' miscellany of Sonnets called *Diana* (1594), that volume . . . could be made to reveal the sequence of an individual lover's moods . . . quite as convincingly as Thorpe's collection' (*W. Shakespeare*, p. 96 n.). He may be invited to try.

[2] Thus the three 'Absence' Sonnets, XCVII-XCIX, betray a frank and joyous confidence hard to reconcile with the desolate 'farewell' note of the previous group and with the silence which follows.

him marry and beget offspring in whom it may survive. That the wife might share his friend's heart is a thought at which his affection is not yet arrogant enough to feel any jealous pang. But if his friend rejects that mightier way of immortalising his beauty, then the poet offers his verse, and the humility of the lowly worshipper breaks suddenly into the exultation of the poet who has power to embalm the fading summer of human beauty in the eternity of art (XVIII).

At XXVII the exaltation of love begins to be touched with pain, and from this point until C we pass through a region of intricately inwoven light and gloom. At first it is only the pain of *absence;* a theme which recurs in several later groups. Here it is handled in a mood of exquisitely sensitive meditation: 'When to the sessions of sweet silent thought' (XXX). In XLIII-XLVII the emotion is less keen, the thought more artificial and ingenious; in XCVII-XCIX the sense of longing is almost overpowered by the richness and splendour of the imagery which conveys it. This striking difference in tone favours the view of many critics, that these groups represent three periods of absence. But already in XXXIII a note of sharper suffering is struck. A third person enters the drama, a woman, whose love the poet's friend has won; she happens to be the poet's mistress (XLII), but it is as friend not as lover that he feels the pang: 'That thou hast her, it is not all my grief, . . . That she hath thee, is of my wailing chief.' In LXXVIII-LXXXVI a fourth person is introduced,—a rival poet, who spends his might in celebrating 'Will,' making Shakespeare 'tongue-tied, speaking of your fame!'

To these pangs of wounded love are added other 'strains of woe' less clearly defined and more rarely

touched: discontent with his humble rank and means, public resentment and ill-will (XXIX, XC); the spectacle in the world at large of wrong triumphant over virtue and wisdom, and 'captive good attending captain ill' (LXVI); the sense, quickened by his friend's brilliant adolescence, of the passing away of the glory of his own youth (LXXIII). To these complex griefs the poet of the Sonnets applies two powerful solvents—love and poetry. Sometimes the glory of the lover is uppermost, sometimes the glory of the poet; sometimes they blend. Even in its moments of bitterest disillusion, his love does not cease to be a fascination, nor the monumental phrasing of it a delight. When 'absent' he can revel like the rich man in his treasure, 'The which he will not every hour survey, For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure' (LII). 'When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,' his soul sings hymns at the thought of his friend's sweet love (XXIX); when grieving for the dead, that thought restores all losses (XXX); when his friend plays him false, he can ignore the momentary 'clouding of his sun' (XXXIII), and exult in his inseparable unity with the friend who has robbed him of his love (XL, XLII). Even his friend's scorn cannot make him disloyal: 'Such is my love, to thee I so belong, That for thy right myself will bear all wrong' (LXXXVIII). Only when utterly driven from his friend's heart will his endurance break down, and then his life will give way too (XCII), unless haply he should live on in ignorance of what he has lost and glory in the beauteous habitation of vice, 'where beauty's veil doth cover every blot' (XCV).

And the poet comes in aid of the lover. The 'decrepit' poet, 'lame by fortune's dearest spite,' is yet conscious of his own 'better part'; and glories in its power as that which will perpetuate, like the

perfume of dead roses, the 'truth' of the fickle friend (LIV, LV, LX, LXII, LXIII, LXV), and perpetuate himself, after death, in his friend's memory (LXXIV).

If the lover's intoxication gives the climax to the first Absence group (XXVII-XXXII), that of the poet communicates its wonderful *rallegrando* to the close of the Betrayal-group (XXXIII-LV) which follows; and in the ensuing group (LVII-LXXV), as has been seen, it is a dominant inspiration, culminating once more in the close. In the group beginning at LXXVI the poet takes cognisance of the world's opinion of his poetry, glories in its 'barren monotony,' since 'you and love are still my argument,' and scorns the 'alien pens' which owe all their eloquence to the virtues of their subject (LXIX). But in the final revulsion (LXXXVII) the literary glories of poetry are forgotten: it is no more the eternal monument of passion, only its lyric cry. The anguish of the 'Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing' craves no marble record.

The closing Sonnets of this section leave it doubtful how we are to interpret this farewell. But it was not final, and already the three closing 'Absence' Sonnets (XCVII-XCIX)—if these are rightly placed—with their confident and even playful intimacy, spring like 'a budding morrow' in the midnight of desolation. Yet an interval of silence follows (CIV), and when the poet takes up the pen again, reminiscence of the old intimacy is mingled with pleas for forgiveness. Clearly there was something more than silence to forgive. Courtly chidings of his truant Muse (C, CI), ingenious excuses for neglect (CII), are succeeded by fresh assurances that though he has 'ranged' from his 'home of love' (CIX), 'gone here and there and made myself a motley to the view' (CX), and 'hoisted sail to all the

winds which should transport me farthest from your sight' (CXVII), he is yet not 'false of heart' (CIX). The Siren limbecks 'foul as hell' which had beguiled him had only fortified his love (CXIX). But he was guilty of offences enough, bred by the subduing bias of his profession (CXI), and magnified by 'vulgar scandal' (CXII, CXXI), and only the friend's love and pity fills the impression stamped by that brand upon his brow. This and some other Sonnets resume thoughts already uttered in the earlier sections. The distinguishing note of this final group is the magnificent assurance of the triumph of love. The splendid 'Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments' (CXVI) is the intellectual focus of the entire Sonnet series. 'Love 's not Time's fool'; and as Love supersedes all mechanic records of the past (CXXII), so it makes the new births of time familiar (CXXIII) and emancipates from the caprices of Fortune (CXXIV).

The supreme poetic worth of the Sonnets makes the question of their origin in one sense idle. They are there, once for all, and their beauty is neither enhanced nor impaired, whether they reflect Shakespeare's actual experiences or body forth his dreams. But the student of Shakespeare's mind is compelled to seek a solution to this problem,—to find a *modus vivendi* between Wordsworth's confident assertion, that Shakespeare here 'unlock'd his heart,' and Browning's peremptory retort: 'Did Shakespeare? If so, the less Shakespeare he!' The discussion has hitherto tended to become a debate between two extreme views, both congenial to matter-of-fact critics of different types. The one sees in the Sonnets pure autobiography, the other a mere literary exercise. The zest of controversy has, however, generated a large amount of investigation, some of it of high value,

along the lines thus suggested. Since Malone first called attention to the Sonnets, in 1780, the attempt to identify the actors in the personal history they suggest has never flagged, and it has been pursued with unsurpassed eagerness during the last two years. Mr. Lee, who has taken a leading part in working out the personal background of the Sonnets, nevertheless allows personal influence an extremely limited share in their production, and his comparative survey of the methods and *motifs* of the Elizabethan sonneteers is the most important contribution yet made to the view that Shakespeare's sonnets originated in 'the exacting conventions of the sonneteering contagion, and not in his personal experiences or emotions.'

Both these extreme views, if they do not imply a certain bluntness of literary perception, have at least tended to concentrate attention upon matters foreign to literature, or to what is most vital in literature. But it is necessary to summarise the results.

The most negative criticism of the Sonnets admits that they were addressed to a real youth. For the most part it admits also the reality of the 'rival poet' and the 'dark lady,' and of the intrigue in which all four are represented as involved. In the first controversy, the supporters of the claims of William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, appeared, until recently, to hold the field. Their case rested largely upon highly equivocal arguments,—the dedication 'To Mr. W. H.,' and the play (in CXXXV) upon the name 'Will'; fortified by some facts of undoubted significance, such as Herbert's known unwillingness to marry, and his intrigue with a woman who demonstrably had relations with Shakespeare's company.[1] But Mary Fitton's history and person have proved to be in very imperfect accord with the characteristics of

[1] Kempe, in 1600, dedicated to her his *Nine daies wonder*.

the 'dark lady' of the Sonnets; her 'raven-black' hair was brown, her 'eyes so suited'[1] were grey. Such discrepancies are not fatal to the identification, but they give it no support, and Pembroke's connexion with Mrs. Fitton in no way mitigates the grave chronological difficulty involved in his claim. For Herbert, who was born in 1580, came to London, as a youth of eighteen, in the spring of 1598. If he was the person addressed, Shakespeare had made his acquaintance, won his friendship, produced some at least of his 'sugred Sonnets,' and Francis Meres had read them, written of them, and passed his book through the tedious processes of Elizabethan publication, within six months of that date. The suggestion that the Sonnets thus celebrated belonged to a different series, of which, in spite of Shakespeare's fame, no syllable ever became, or has become, known, could only be justified by direct evidence that Herbert was the friend addressed.

The rival claims of Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, have been kept in the background by the extravagance of some of his advocates, as well as by apparent discrepancies, which a more minute scrutiny of his history does much to remove. Seven years older than Pembroke (he was born October 6, 1573), he was already, when Shakespeare made his acquaintance in 1592, among the most brilliant figures at court. The words in which Shakespeare dedicated to him, in 1593 and 1594, the *Venus and Adonis* and the *Lucrece*, show that their acquaintance swiftly ripened into intimate friendship. Many other men of letters enjoyed his patronage. Nash (1594), Gervase Markham (1595), Florio (1596) dedicated works to him; Barnabe Barnes (1593) and Gabriel

[1] Sonnet CXXVII. The text, to her 'eyes' twice: probably by an obvious blunder, refers 'hairs' is to be restored.

Harvey (1593) addressed him in enthusiastic Sonnets. His portraits attest his personal beauty.[1] He resisted the wish of his mother and his guardian (Burleigh) to find him a wife (1593). Two years later he fell in love with Elizabeth Vernon, a Maid of Honour, secretly married her in 1598, and incurred thereby the Queen's lasting resentment. During the autumn of 1599, in disgrace at court, he is recorded to have passed his time 'merely in going to plays every day.' He joined in Essex's conspiracy, and it was Shakespeare's *Richard II.* that they chose as a provocative on the eve of action. Narrowly escaping his friend's fate, he passed the rest of the reign in prison. His prompt release by James was welcomed with a jubilant outburst of song from his wide literary *clientèle*.

What we know of Southampton's career sufficiently satisfies the meagre biographical data of the Sonnets; but its acceptance leaves many problems still unsolved. The dark lady remains as mysterious as before. The determination of date is not altogether clear. The first Sonnets must be referred to the days when 'our love was new' (CII), that is, to 1593-95. This is one of a group of retrospective Sonnets, some of which, such as CIV, must be placed three years later, others possibly later still. Mr. Lee holds that CVII celebrates Southampton's release from prison on the accession of James.[2]

[1] Miss Stopes has even detected the 'buds of marjoram' (XCIX 7) in the curling tips of his long locks.

[2] The Herbertists explain this of the revolt of Essex in 1601; some recent Southamptonists think of the Spanish perils which ended with the peace of Vervins, 1598. Miss C. C. Stopes has recently sought to connect it with the fears entertained for Elizabeth in her climacteric year, 1596 (*Athen.* Mar. 26, 1898). She adduces a MS. letter of Camden's in the Cotton collection (*Julius Cæsar*, iii. f. 64), which, though it does not prove her case, is of some interest. Camden wrote to Cotton on March 15, 1596: 'I know you are (as we all have

The identification of the 'rival poet' remains, in spite of some promising suggestions, a matter of surmise only. That there was, strictly speaking, more than one is shown by the repeated use of the plural ('every alien pen hath got my use,' LXXVIII). Some are referred to with disdain,—as owing all their merit to the inspiration of their patron's eyes,—

> Thine eyes that taught the dumb on high to sing
> And heavy ignorance aloft to fly.—LXXVIII.

But one is singled out for lofty though embittered praise, a 'better spirit,' before whose 'precious phrase by all the Muses filed' Shakespeare's 'tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still' (LXXXV). Mr. Lee has suggested that among the throng was Barnabe Barnes, a young poet who in the early nineties was promising more in poetry than he was destined to perform. But it is hard to believe that Barnes was the recipient of the high compliments of LXXXVI, particularly if, as Mr. Lee thinks, he was the 'dumb' and 'heavy' poet of LXXVIII.[1] On the other hand, the attempt of Professor Minto to identify the eulogised rival with Chapman, the 'proud full sail of whose great verse' seems to be so felicitously

been) in a melancholy and pensive cogitation.' The Queen had suffered from 'a sleepless indisposition,' with 'an inflammation from the breast upward,' 'and her mind altogether averted from medicine in this her climacterical year did more than terrify us all, especially the last Friday in the morning,' so that the lords of the council, in great alarm, took hurried measures to defend the court and the treasure, arrested a number of gentlemen known to be 'hunger-starved for innovations,' and shipped 'all the vagrants hereabout' to the Low Countries.

[1] Mr. Lee sees an allusion in these lines to Barnes' sonnet to Southampton, wherein he celebrated Southampton's 'eyes' ('Those heavenly lamps which give the Muses light') and begged him—

> To view my Muse with your judicial sight;
> Whom, when time shall have taught by flight to rise,
> Shall to thy virtues of much worth aspire.

described, is met by the difficulty, serious to a Southamptonist, that Chapman had not produced any notably 'great verse' before 1598.

Nor can much weight be attached (cf. Lee, p. 135) to Minto's parallel between Chapman's sententious imagery—it is hardly more—about the supernatural 'familiars' who inspired or deluded him,—'an unthrifty angel that deludes my simple fancy,'—and Shakespeare's jest at 'that affable familiar ghost who nightly gulls him with intelligence.' Yet there were elements in both Shakespeare and Chapman which qualified the one to play Hotspur to the other's Glendower, and the hypothesis is at least well invented. Mr. Wyndham, finally, makes a resolute attempt to fix Shakespeare's eulogy upon Michael Drayton (*Poems of Shakespeare*, 255 f.).

It remains to add a single word upon the opposite class of investigations which have established the existence in the Sonnets of a large element of thought and *motif* which belonged as common topics to Elizabethan sonneteering at large. Mr. Lee has thrown a flood of light upon the contemporary sonnet in England and in France. But his conclusions in regard to Shakespeare, notwithstanding the admirable learning which he has arrayed in their support, are vitiated by the assumption that a thought or a phrase which can be paralleled from contemporary literature is thereby proved to have no relation to the poet's 'experience or emotions,' but only to his propensities of imitation or rivalry, of judicious posing or calculated flattery.[1] These are not the moods in which even a Shakespeare produces the supreme poetry of the

[1] 'The sole biographical inference deducible from the Sonnets is that at one time in his career Shakespeare disdained no weapon of flattery in an endeavour to monopolise the bountiful patronage of a young man of rank' (Lee, p. 159).

Sonnets. Of all so-called 'imitative' elements in them there is not one which he has not touched to finer issues and steeped in the exquisite and unmistakable hues of his own mind. The process of creation which they suggest is one equally distinct from a simple rendering of personal experience and the borrowed expression of the experience of others—a process in which a definite individual experience of emotion and passion forms a persistent undercurrent of all poetic activities, a vital *point de repaire* to which thought and imagination continually recur, and which determines the direction of their boldest and seemingly most independent flights. The world of the Sonnets is always a little aloof from actualities, but never remote from them; the personalities of friend and mistress are continually suggested, but we never catch their profile, or realise any single definite trait or act of theirs. The little tokens of favour, the smile, the passing word, the vital moments of intercourse which are enshrined in the lyric monuments of Petrarch, have apparently no part in Shakespeare's. On the other hand, the metaphysical ideas, the Platonic commonplaces of Elizabethan thought, are wrought into intimate union with the concrete emotions of friendship and love. No philosophic system, Platonic or other, is to be gathered from the Sonnets, any more than from the dramas. The personal relation draws all the intellectual material to its own focus and impresses upon it its own bias and complexion. Thus, as Mr. Wyndham has pointed out,[1] the Elizabethan theory of beauty as expounded by Hoby in his translation of Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* and by Spenser in the *Hymnes*, conceived it as 'an influence of the heavenly bountifulness' reflected in earthly things. But for Shakespeare

[1] *Poems of W. Shakespeare*, CXXII.

the Friend's beauty becomes itself the very archetypal pattern and substance of which all beautiful things are but shadows. His is—

> Beauty's pattern to succeeding men.—XIX.

And where the Platonist thought holds its own successfully, it is with the sacrifice of every tittle of technical phraseology. That Love triumphs over Time, for instance, was a commonplace of the schools; but how intensely Shakespearean is the expression of it:

> Love's not Time's fool.

And how intimately the thought appears inwoven with his experience and conviction, in the magnificent defiance of the closing lines:

> If this be error and upon me proved,
> I never writ, nor no man ever loved.—CXVI.

SONNETS

TO THE ONLIE BEGETTER OF
THESE INSUING SONNETS
MR. W. H. ALL HAPPINESSE
AND THAT ETERNITIE
PROMISED BY
OUR EVER-LIVING POET
WISHETH
THE WELL-WISHING
ADVENTURER IN
SETTING
FORTH
T. T.

I

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content
And, tender churl, makest waste in niggarding.
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

i. 6. *self-substantial fuel*, fuel which is of thy own substance.

11. *thy content*, what thou dost contain.

II

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held:
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days,
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
Were an all-eating shame and thriftless praise.
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,
If thou couldst answer 'This fair child of mine
Shall sum my count and make my old excuse,'
Proving his beauty by succession thine!
This were to be new-made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

III

Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest
Now is the time that face should form another;
Whose fresh repair if now thou not renewest,
Thou dost beguile the world, unbless some mother.
For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond will be the tomb
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calis back the lovely April of her prime:
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see
Despite of wrinkles this thy golden time.
But if thou live, remember'd not to be,
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

IV

Unthrifty loveliness, why dost thou spend
Upon thyself thy beauty's legacy?
Nature's bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,
And being frank she lends to those are free.
Then, beauteous niggard, why dost thou abuse
The bounteous largess given thee to give?
Profitless usurer, why dost thou use
So great a sum of sums, yet canst not live?
For having traffic with thyself alone,
Thou of thyself thy sweet self dost deceive.
Then how, when nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable audit canst thou leave?
Thy unused beauty must be tomb'd with thee,
Which, used, lives th' executor to be.

V

Those hours that with gentle work did frame
The lovely gaze where every eye doth dwell,
Will play the tyrants to the very same
And that unfair which fairly doth excel;
For never-resting time leads summer on
To hideous winter and confounds him there;
Sap check'd with frost and lusty leaves quite gone,
Beauty o'ersnow'd and bareness every where:
Then, were not summer's distillation left,
A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass,
Beauty's effect with beauty were bereft,
Nor it nor no remembrance what it was:
But flowers distill'd, though they with winter meet,
Leese but their show; their substance still lives sweet.

iv. 4. *free*, generous. beauty.
v. 4. *unfair*, deprive of 14. *Leese*, lose.

VI

Then let not winter's ragged hand deface
In thee thy summer, ere thou be distill'd:
Make sweet some vial; treasure thou some place
With beauty's treasure, ere it be self-kill'd.
That use is not forbidden usury
Which happies those that pay the willing loan;
That 's for thyself to breed another thee,
Or ten times happier, be it ten for one;
Ten times thyself were happier than thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigured thee:
Then what could death do, if thou shouldst depart,
Leaving thee living in posterity?
Be not self-will'd, for thou art much too fair
To be death's conquest and make worms thine heir

VII

Lo, in the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,
Serving with looks his sacred majesty;
And having climb'd the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,
Attending on his golden pilgrimage;
But when from highmost pitch, with weary car,
Like feeble age, he reeleth from the day,
The eyes, 'fore duteous, now converted are
From his low tract and look another way:
So thou, thyself out-going in thy noon,
Unlook'd-on diest, unless thou get a son.

vi. 1. *ragged*, rugged, rude. vii. 12. *tract*, course.

VIII

Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?
Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy.
Why lovest thou that which thou receivest not gladly,
Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well-tuned sounds,
By unions married, do offend thine ear,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.
Mark how one string, sweet husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering,
Resembling sire and child and happy mother
Who, all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechless song, being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee: 'thou single wilt prove none.'

IX

Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye
That thou consumest thyself in single life?
Ah! if thou issueless shalt hap to die,
The world will wail thee, like a makeless wife;
The world will be thy widow and still weep
That thou no form of thee hast left behind,
When every private widow well may keep
By children's eyes her husband's shape in mind.
Look, what an unthrift in the world doth spend
Shifts but his place, for still the world enjoys it;
But beauty's waste hath in the world an end,
And kept unused, the user so destroys it.
No love toward others in that bosom sits
That on himself such murderous shame commits.

viii. 7. *confounds*, dost waste. ix. 4. *makeless*, mateless.

X

For shame! deny that thou bear'st love to any,
Who for thyself art so unprovident.
Grant, if thou wilt, thou art beloved of many,
But that thou none lovest is most evident;
For thou art so possess'd with murderous hate
That 'gainst thyself thou stick'st not to conspire,
Seeking that beauteous roof to ruinate
Which to repair should be thy chief desire.
O, change thy thought, that I may change my mind!
Shall hate be fairer lodged than gentle love?
Be, as thy presence is, gracious and kind,
Or to thyself at least kind-hearted prove:
Make thee another self, for love of me,
That beauty still may live in thine or thee.

XI

As fast as thou shalt wane, so fast thou growest
In one of thine, from that which thou departest;
And that fresh blood which youngly thou bestowest
Thou mayst call thine when thou from youth convertest.
Herein lives wisdom, beauty and increase;
Without this, folly, age and cold decay:
If all were minded so, the times should cease
And threescore year would make the world away.
Let those whom Nature hath not made for store,
Harsh featureless and rude, barrenly perish:
Look, whom she best endow'd she gave the more;
Which bounteous gift thou shouldst in bounty cherish:
She carved thee for her seal, and meant thereby
Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.

x. 7. *that beauteous roof*, 'house,' family.

xi. 9. *for store*, to breed from 'store' is properly breeding-stock. L.

14. *copy*, original (from which the impression is taken). A similar transfer of meaning occurs in 'model.'

XII

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave day sunk in hideous night;
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white;
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,
And summer's green all girded up in sheaves,
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard,
Then of thy beauty do I question make,
That thou among the wastes of time must go,
Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake
And die as fast as they see others grow;
And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence
Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.

XIII

O, that you were yourself! but, love, you are
No longer yours than you yourself here live:
Against this coming end you should prepare,
And your sweet semblance to some other give.
So should that beauty which you hold in lease
Find no determination; then you were
Yourself again after yourself's decease,
When your sweet issue your sweet form should bear.
Who lets so fair a house fall to decay,
Which husbandry in honour might uphold
Against the stormy gusts of winter's day
And barren rage of death's eternal cold?
O, none but unthrifts! Dear my love, you know
You had a father; let your son say so.

xii. 9. *question make*, consider.

XIV

Not from the stars do I my judgement pluck;
And yet methinks I have astronomy,
But not to tell of good or evil luck,
Of plagues, of dearths, or seasons' quality;
Nor can I fortune to brief minutes tell,
Pointing to each his thunder, rain and wind,
Or say with princes if it shall go well,
By oft predict that I in heaven find:
But from thine eyes my knowledge I derive,
And, constant stars, in them I read such art,
As truth and beauty shall together thrive,
If from thyself to store thou wouldst convert;
Or else of thee this I prognosticate:
Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date.

XV

When I consider every thing that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment,
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment;
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and check'd even by the self-same sky,
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory;
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay,
To change your day of youth to sullied night;
And all in war with Time for love of you,
As he takes from you, I engraft you new.

xiv. 2. *astronomy*, astrology.
10. *art*, knowledge.
12. *store;* cf. xi. 9.
xv. 9. *conceit*, idea.
xvi. 9. *lines of life*, living delineations, *i.e.* children.
xvi. 10. *this, Time's pencil.* The semblance of the man at any moment is conceived as his portrait, drawn by Time. But

XVI

But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant, Time?
And fortify yourself in your decay
With means more blessed than my barren rhyme?
Now stand you on the top of happy hours,
And many maiden gardens, yet unset,
With virtuous wish would bear your living flowers
Much liker than your painted counterfeit:
So should the lines of life that life repair,
Which this, Time's pencil, or my pupil pen,
Neither in inward worth nor outward fair,
Can make you live yourself in eyes of men.
To give away yourself keeps yourself still;
And you must live, drawn by your own sweet skill.

XVII

Who will believe my verse in time to come,
If it were fill'd with your most high deserts?
Though yet, heaven knows, it is but as a tomb
Which hides your life and shows not half your parts.
If I could write the beauty of your eyes
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say 'This poet lies;
Such heavenly touches ne'er touch'd earthly faces.'
So should my papers yellow'd with their age
Be scorn'd like old men of less truth than tongue,
And your true rights be term'd a poet's rage
And stretched metre of an antique song:
But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice, in it and in my rhyme.

Time continually alters, and finally spoils, his work; hence 'Time's pencil' is no remedy against decay. Others take 'Time's pencil' in direct reference to the 'painted counterfeit' (v. 8), but it is difficult to attach any meaning, in that case, to 'Time.'

11. *fair*, beauty; so in xviii. 7, 10.

xvii. 13. *that time*, then.

XVIII

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
  So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
  So long lives this and this gives life to thee.

XIX

Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,
And make the earth devour her own sweet brood;
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
And burn the long-lived phœnix in her blood;
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleets,
And do whate'er thou wilt, swift-footed Time,
To the wide world and all her fading sweets;
But I forbid thee one most heinous crime:
O, carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,
Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen;
Him in thy course untainted do allow
For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.
  Yet, do thy worst, old Time: despite thy wrong,
  My love shall in my verse ever live young.

xix. 5. *fleets;* so Dyce for Q 'fleet'st.' This dialectal form of the 2nd pers. sing. is not unknown to Shakespeare; cf. viii. 7.

XX

A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted
Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted
With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;
An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,
Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
A man in hue, all 'hues' in his controlling,
Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.
And for a woman wert thou first created;
Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a-doting,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she prick'd thee out for women's pleasure,
Mine be thy love and thy love's use their treasure.

XXI

So is it not with me as with that Muse
Stirr'd by a painted beauty to his verse,
Who heaven itself for ornament doth use
And every fair with his fair doth rehearse,
Making a couplement of proud compare,
With sun and moon, with earth and sea's rich gems,
With April's first-born flowers, and all things rare
That heaven's air in this huge rondure hems.
O, let me, true in love, but truly write,
And then believe me, my love is as fair
As any mother's child, though not so bright
As those gold candles fix'd in heaven's air:
Let them say more that like of hearsay well;
I will not praise that purpose not to sell.

xx. 7. *hue*, form.

XXII

My glass shall not persuade me I am old,
So long as youth and thou are of one date;
But when in thee time's furrows I behold,
Then look I death my days should expiate.
For all that beauty that doth cover thee
Is but the seemly raiment of my heart,
Which in thy breast doth live, as thine in me:
How can I then be elder than thou art?
O, therefore, love, be of thyself so wary
As I, not for myself, but for thee will;
Bearing thy heart, which I will keep so chary
As tender nurse her babe from faring ill.
Presume not on thy heart when mine is slain;
Thou gavest me thine, not to give back again.

XXIII

As an unperfect actor on the stage
Who with his fear is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart,
So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burden of mine own love's might.
O, let my books be then the eloquence
And dumb presagers of my speaking breast;
Who plead for love and look for recompense
More than that tongue that more hath more express'd.
O, learn to read what silent love hath writ:
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

xxii. 4. *expiate*, terminate.

XXIV

Mine eye hath play'd the painter and hath stell'd
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart;
My body is the frame wherein 'tis held,
And pérspective it is best painter's art.
For through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where your true image pictured lies;
Which in my bosom's shop is hanging still,
That hath his windows glazed with thine eyes.
Now see what good turns eyes for eyes have done:
Mine eyes have drawn thy shape, and thine for me
Are windows to my breast, where-through the sun
Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee;
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art,
They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

XXV

Let those who are in favour with their stars
Of public honour and proud titles boast,
Whilst I, whom fortune of such triumph bars,
Unlook'd for joy in that I honour most.
Great princes' favourites their fair leaves spread
But as the marigold at the sun's eye,
And in themselves their pride lies buried,
For at a frown they in their glory die.
The painful warrior famoused for fight,
After a thousand victories once foil'd,
Is from the book of honour razed quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd:
Then happy I, that love and am beloved
Where I may not remove nor be removed.

xxiv. 1. *stell'd*, fixed. Qq print *steeld*.

4. *perspective*, a glass cut to produce an optical effect; here the painter, or eye, is the glass through which the beauty is seen.

13. *cunning*, art, skill.

XXVI

Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,
To thee I send this written embassage,
To witness duty, not to show my wit:
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in wanting words to show it,
But that I hope some good conceit of thine
In thy soul's thought, all naked, will bestow it;
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving
Points on me graciously with fair aspect
And puts apparel on my tatter'd loving,
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect:
Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee;
Till then not show my head where thou mayst prove me.

XXVII

Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired;
But then begins a journey in my head,
To work my mind, when body's work 's expired:
For then my thoughts, from far where I abide,
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see:
Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous and her old face new.
Lo! thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
For thee and for myself no quiet find.

xxvi. 7. *conceit*, idea.
xxvii. 9. *imaginary*, imaginative. 10. *shadow*, image.

XXVIII

How can I then return in happy plight,
That am debarr'd the benefit of rest?
When day's oppression is not eased by night,
But day by night, and night by day, oppress'd?
And each, though enemies to either's reign,
Do in consent shake hands to torture me;
The one by toil, the other to complain
How far I toil, still farther off from thee.
I tell the day, to please him thou art bright,
And dost him grace when clouds do blot the heaven:
So flatter I the swart-complexion'd night;
When sparkling stars twire not thou gild'st the even.
But day doth daily draw my sorrows longer,
And night doth nightly make grief's strength
seem stronger.

XXIX

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

xxviii. 12. *twire*, twinkle (both words cognate with *two*); hence 'peep' (the sight being divided and incomplete).

XXX

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

XXXI

Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts,
Which I by lacking have supposed dead;
And there reigns love and all love's loving parts,
And all those friends which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obsequious tear
Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine eye,
As interest of the dead, which now appear
But things removed that hidden in thee lie!
Thou art the grave where buried love doth live,
Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,
Who all their parts of me to thee did give:
That due of many now is thine alone:
Their images I loved I view in thee,
And thou, all they, hast all the all of me.

xxx. 4. *new;* adj. for adv.

XXXII

If thou survive my well-contented day,
When that churl Death my bones with dust shall cover,
And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,
Compare them with the bettering of the time,
And though they be outstripp'd by every pen,
Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,
Exceeded by the height of happier men.
O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:
'Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing age,
A dearer birth than this his love had brought,
To march in ranks of better equipage:
But since he died and poets better prove,
Theirs for their style I 'll read, his for his love.'

XXXIII

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendour on my brow;
But out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

xxxii. 7. *Reserve*, preserve.
xxxiii. 6. *rack*, driving vapour.
12. *region cloud*, cloud of the upper air.
14. *stain*, be darkened.

XXXIV

Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day,
And make me travel forth without my cloak,
To let base clouds o'ertake me in my way,
Hiding thy bravery in their rotten smoke?
'Tis not enough that through the cloud thou break,
To dry the rain on my storm-beaten face,
For no man well of such a salve can speak
That heals the wound and cures not the disgrace:
Nor can thy shame give physic to my grief;
Though thou repent, yet I have still the loss:
The offender's sorrow lends but weak relief
To him that bears the strong offence's cross.
Ah! but those tears are pearl which thy love sheds,
And they are rich and ransom all ill deeds.

XXXV

No more be grieved at that which thou hast done:
Roses have thorns, and silver fountains mud;
Clouds and eclipses stain both moon and sun,
And loathsome canker lives in sweetest bud.
All men make faults, and even I in this,
Authorizing thy trespass with compare,
Myself corrupting, salving thy amiss,
Excusing thy sins more than thy sins are;
For to thy sensual fault I bring in sense—
Thy adverse party is thy advocate—
And 'gainst myself a lawful plea commence:
Such civil war is in my love and hate,
That I an accessary needs must be
To that sweet thief which sourly robs from me.

xxxiv. 4. *rotten smoke*, foul vapour. 7. *amiss*, offence.
xxxv. 3. *stain*, obscure. 9. *sense*, reason.

XXXVI

Let me confess that we two must be twain,
Although our undivided loves are one:
So shall those blots that do with me remain
Without thy help by me be borne alone.
In our two loves there is but one respect,
Though in our lives a separable spite,
Which though it alter not love's sole effect,
Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love's delight.
I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame,
Nor thou with public kindness honour me,
Unless thou take that honour from thy name:
But do not so; I love thee in such sort
As, thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

XXXVII

As a decrepit father takes delight
To see his active child do deeds of youth,
So I, made lame by fortune's dearest spite,
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth.
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more,
Entitled in thy parts do crowned sit,
I make my love engrafted to this store:
So then I am not lame, poor, nor despised,
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance give
That I in thy abundance am sufficed
And by a part of all thy glory live.
Look, what is best, that best I wish in thee:
This wish I have; then ten times happy me!

xxxvi. 5. *one respect*, one regard.
6. *separable*, separative.

xxxvii. 3. *dearest*, extremest.
7. *Entitled in thy parts*, claiming the first place.

XXXVIII

How can my Muse want subject to invent,
While thou dost breathe, that pour'st into my verse
Thine own sweet argument, too excellent
For every vulgar paper to rehearse?
O, give thyself the thanks, if aught in me
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight;
For who 's so dumb that cannot write to thee,
When thou thyself dost give invention light?
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine which rhymers invocate;
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.
If my slight Muse do please these curious days,
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.

XXXIX

O, how thy worth with manners may I sing,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine own praise to mine own self bring?
And what is 't but mine own when I praise thee?
Even for this let us divided live,
And our dear love lose name of single one,
That by this separation I may give
That due to thee which thou deservest alone.
O absence, what a torment wouldst thou prove,
Were it not thy sour leisure gave sweet leave
To entertain the time with thoughts of love,
Which time and thoughts so sweetly doth deceive,
And that thou teachest how to make one twain,
By praising him here who doth hence remain!

xxxviii. 3. *argument*, theme. 13. *curious*, critical.

XL

Take all my loves, my love, yea, take them all;
What hast thou then more than thou hadst before?
No love, my love, that thou mayst true love call;
All mine was thine before thou hadst this more.
Then if for my love thou my love receivest,
I cannot blame thee for my love thou usest;
But yet be blamed, if thou thyself deceivest
By wilful taste of what thyself refusest.
I do forgive thy robbery, gentle thief,
Although thou steal thee all my poverty;
And yet, love knows, it is a greater grief
To bear love's wrong than hate's known injury.
Lascivious grace, in whom all ill well shows,
Kill me with spites; yet we must not be foes.

XLI

Those pretty wrongs that liberty commits,
When I am sometime absent from thy heart,
Thy beauty and thy years full well befits,
For still temptation follows where thou art.
Gentle thou art and therefore to be won,
Beauteous thou art, therefore to be assailed;
And when a woman woos, what woman's son
Will sourly leave her till she have prevailed?
Ay me! but yet thou mightst my seat forbear,
And chide thy beauty and thy straying youth,
Who lead thee in their riot even there
Where thou art forced to break a twofold truth,
Hers, by thy beauty tempting her to thee,
Thine, by thy beauty being false to me.

xl. 6. *for*, because. xli. 1. *liberty*, license.

XLII

That thou hast her, it is not all my grief,
And yet it may be said I loved her dearly;
That she hath thee, is of my wailing chief,
A loss in love that touches me more nearly.
Loving offenders, thus I will excuse ye:
Thou dost love her, because thou know'st I love her;
And for my sake even so doth she abuse me,
Suffering my friend for my sake to approve her.
If I lose thee, my loss is my love's gain,
And losing her, my friend hath found that loss;
Both find each other, and I lose both twain,
And both for my sake lay on me this cross:
But here 's the joy; my friend and I are one;
Sweet flattery! then she loves but me alone.

XLIII

When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things unrespected;
But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
And darkly bright are bright in dark directed.
Then thou, whose shadow shadows doth make bright.
How would thy shadow's form form happy show
To the clear day with thy much clearer light,
When to unseeing eyes thy shade shines so!
How would, I say, mine eyes be blessed made
By looking on thee in the living day,
When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade
Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay!
All days are nights to see till I see thee,
And nights bright days when dreams do show thee me.

xlii. 7. *abuse*, maltreat. xliii. 2. *unrespected*, unnoticed.

XLIV

If the dull substance of my flesh were thought,
Injurious distance should not stop my way;
For then despite of space I would be brought,
From limits far remote, where thou dost stay.
No matter then although my foot did stand
Upon the farthest earth removed from thee;
For nimble thought can jump both sea and land
As soon as think the place where he would be.
But, ah! thought kills me that I am not thought,
To leap large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
But that so much of earth and water wrought
I must attend time's leisure with my moan,
Receiving nought by elements so slow
But heavy tears, badges of either's woe.

XLV

The other two, slight air and purging fire,
Are both with thee, wherever I abide;
The first my thought, the other my desire,
These present-absent with swift motion slide.
For when these quicker elements are gone
In tender embassy of love to thee,
My life, being made of four, with two alone
Sinks down to death, oppress'd with melancholy;
Until life's composition be recured
By those swift messengers return'd from thee,
Who even but now come back again, assured
Of thy fair health, recounting it to me:
This told, I joy; but then no longer glad,
I send them back again and straight grow sad.

XLVI

Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war
How to divide the conquest of thy sight;
Mine eye my heart thy picture's sight would bar,
My heart mine eye the freedom of that right.
My heart doth plead that thou in him dost lie,
A closet never pierced with crystal eyes,
But the defendant doth that plea deny,
And says in him thy fair appearance lies.
To 'cide this title is impanneled
A quest of thoughts, all tenants to the heart;
And by their verdict is determined
The clear eye's moiety and the dear heart's part:
As thus; mine eye's due is thy outward part,
And my heart's right thy inward love of heart.

XLVII

Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is took,
And each doth good turns now unto the other:
When that mine eye is famish'd for a look,
Or heart in love with sighs himself doth smother,
With my love's picture then my eye doth feast
And to the painted banquet bids my heart;
Another time mine eye is my heart's guest
And in his thoughts of love doth share a part:
So, either by thy picture or my love,
Thyself away art present still with me;
For thou not farther than my thoughts canst move,
And I am still with them and they with thee;
Or, if they sleep, thy picture in my sight
Awakes my heart to heart's and eye's delight.

XLVIII

How careful was I, when I took my way,
Each trifle under truest bars to thrust,
That to my use it might unused stay
From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust!
But thou, to whom my jewels trifles are,
Most worthy comfort, now my greatest grief,
Thou, best of dearest and mine only care,
Art left the prey of every vulgar thief.
Thee have I not lock'd up in any chest,
Save where thou art not, though I feel thou art,
Within the gentle closure of my breast,
From whence at pleasure thou mayst come and part;
And even thence thou wilt be stol'n, I fear,
For truth proves thievish for a prize so dear.

XLIX

Against that time, if ever that time come,
When I shall see thee frown on my defects,
When as thy love hath cast his utmost sum,
Call'd to that audit by advised respects;
Against that time when thou shalt strangely pass,
And scarcely greet me with that sun, thine eye,
When love, converted from the thing it was,
Shall reasons find of settled gravity,
Against that time do I ensconce me here
Within the knowledge of mine own desert,
And this my hand against myself uprear,
To guard the lawful reasons on thy part:
To leave poor me thou hast the strength of laws,
Since why to love I can allege no cause.

xlix. 4. *respects*, motives, considerations.

L

How heavy do I journey on the way,
When what I seek, my weary travel's end,
Doth teach that ease and that repose to say
'Thus far the miles are measured from thy friend!'
The beast that bears me, tired with my woe,
Plods dully on, to bear that weight in me,
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider loved not speed, being made from thee:
The bloody spur cannot provoke him on
That sometimes anger thrusts into his hide;
Which heavily he answers with a groan,
More sharp to me than spurring to his side;
For that same groan doth put this in my mind;
My grief lies onward and my joy behind.

LI

Thus can my love excuse the slow offence
Of my dull bearer when from thee I speed:
From where thou art why should I haste me thence?
Till I return, of posting is no need.
O, what excuse will my poor beast then find,
When swift extremity can seem but slow?
Then should I spur, though mounted on the wind;
In winged speed no motion shall I know:
Then can no horse with my desire keep pace;
Therefore desire, of perfect'st love being made,
Shall neigh—no dull flesh—in his fiery race;
But love, for love, thus shall excuse my jade;
Since from thee going he went wilful-slow,
Towards thee I 'll run, and give him leave to go.

li. 14. *go*, walk.

LII

So am I as the rich, whose blessed key
Can bring him to his sweet up-locked treasure,
The which he will not every hour survey,
For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure.
Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,
Since, seldom coming, in the long year set,
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captain jewels in the carcanet.
So is the time that keeps you as my chest,
Or as the wardrobe which the robe doth hide,
To make some special instant special blest,
By new unfolding his imprison'd pride.
Blessed are you, whose worthiness gives scope,
Being had, to triumph, being lack'd, to hope.

LIII

What is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shadows on you tend?
Since every one hath, every one, one shade,
And you, but one, can every shadow lend.
Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit
Is poorly imitated after you;
On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,
And you in Grecian tires are painted new:
Speak of the spring and foison of the year;
The one doth shadow of your beauty show,
The other as your bounty doth appear;
And you in every blessed shape we know.
In all external grace you have some part,
But you like none, none you, for constant heart.

lii. 4. *For blunting*, for fear of blunting.
8. *carcanet*, a jewelled collar.
liii. 8. *tires*, head-dresses.
9. *foison*, abundance.

LIV

O, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give!
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odour which doth in it live.
The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumed tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns and play as wantonly
When summer's breath their masked buds discloses:
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwoo'd and unrespected fade,
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made:
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall fade, my verse distils your truth.

LV

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgement that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

liv. 5. *canker-blooms*, wild roses.

LVI

Sweet love, renew thy force; be it not said
Thy edge should blunter be than appetite,
Which but to-day by feeding is allay'd,
To-morrow sharpen'd in his former might:
So, love, be thou; although to-day thou fill
Thy hungry eyes even till they wink with fullness,
To-morrow see again, and do not kill
The spirit of love with a perpetual dullness.
Let this sad interim like the ocean be
Which parts the shore, where two contracted new
Come daily to the banks, that, when they see
Return of love, more blest may be the view;
Else call it winter, which being full of care
Makes summer's welcome thrice more wish'd,
more rare.

LVII

Being your slave, what should I do but tend
Upon the hours and times of your desire?
I have no precious time at all to spend,
Nor services to do, till you require.
Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour
Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for you,
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour
When you have bid your servant once adieu;
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,
But, like a sad slave, stay and think of nought
Save, where you are how happy you make those.
So true a fool is love that in your will,
Though you do any thing, he thinks no ill.

LVIII

That god forbid that made me first your slave,
I should in thought control your times of pleasure,
Or at your hand the account of hours to crave,
Being your vassal, bound to stay your leisure!
O, let me suffer, being at your beck,
The imprison'd absence of your liberty;
And patience, tame to sufferance, bide each check,
Without accusing you of injury.
Be where you list, your charter is so strong
That you yourself may privilege your time
To what you will; to you it doth belong
Yourself to pardon of self-doing crime.
I am to wait, though waiting so be hell,
Not blame your pleasure, be it ill or well.

LIX

If there be nothing new, but that which is
Hath been before, how are our brains beguiled,
Which, labouring for invention, bear amiss
The second burthen of a former child!
O, that record could with a backward look,
Even of five hundred courses of the sun,
Show me your image in some antique book,
Since mind at first in character was done!
That I might see what the old world could say
To this composed wonder of your frame;
Whether we are mended, or whether better they,
Or whether revolution be the same.
O, sure I am, the wits of former days
To subjects worse have given admiring praise.

lix. 8. *character*, writing.

LX

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:
And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

LXI

Is it thy will thy image should keep open
My heavy eyelids to the weary night?
Dost thou desire my slumbers should be broken,
While shadows like to thee do mock my sight?
Is it thy spirit that thou send'st from thee
So far from home into my deeds to pry,
To find out shames and idle hours in me,
The scope and tenour of thy jealousy?
O, no! thy love, though much, is not so great:
It is my love that keeps mine eye awake;
Mine own true love that doth my rest defeat,
To play the watchman ever for thy sake:
For thee watch I whilst thou dost wake elsewhere,
From me far off, with others all too near.

lx. 5. *main*, full flood. 8. *confound*, destroy.

LXII

Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye
And all my soul and all my every part;
And for this sin there is no remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Methinks no face so gracious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account;
And for myself mine own worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glass shows me myself indeed,
Beated and chopp'd with tann'd antiquity,
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read;
Self so self-loving were iniquity.
'Tis thee, myself, that for myself I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.

LXIII

Against my love shall be, as I am now,
With Time's injurious hand crush'd and o'erworn;
When hours have drain'd his blood and fill'd his brow
With lines and wrinkles; when his youthful morn
Hath travell'd on to age's steepy night,
And all those beauties whereof now he 's king
Are vanishing or vanish'd out of sight,
Stealing away the treasure of his spring;
For such a time do I now fortify
Against confounding age's cruel knife,
That he shall never cut from memory
My sweet love's beauty, though my lover's life:
His beauty shall in these black lines be seen,
And they shall live, and he in them still green.

lxii. 10. *Beated*, flayed. Properly an agricultural term (still used in Devonshire) for paring away the sods from moorland.

lxiii. 1. *Against*, against the time when.

LXIV

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich proud cost of outworn buried age;
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed
And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss and loss with store;
When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself confounded to decay;
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminate,
That Time will come and take my love away.
This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

LXV

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
But sad mortality o'er-sways their power,
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays?
O fearful meditation! where, alack,
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back?
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
O, none, unless this miracle have might,
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

LXVI

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry,
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive good attending captain ill:
  Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
  Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

LXVII

Ah! wherefore with infection should he live,
And with his presence grace impiety,
That sin by him advantage should achieve
And lace itself with his society?
Why should false painting imitate his cheek,
And steal dead seeing of his living hue?
Why should poor beauty indirectly seek
Roses of shadow, since his rose is true?
Why should he live, now Nature bankrupt is,
Beggar'd of blood to blush through lively veins?
For she hath no exchequer now but his,
And, proud of many, lives upon his gains.
  O, him she stores, to show what wealth she had
  In days long since, before these last so bad.

lxvii. 4. *lace*, adorn. 6. *seeing*, seeming appearance.

LXVIII

Thus is his cheek the map of days outworn,
When beauty lived and died as flowers do now,
Before these bastard signs of fair were born,
Or durst inhabit on a living brow;
Before the golden tresses of the dead,
The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,
To live a second life on second head;
Ere beauty's dead fleece made another gay:
In him those holy antique hours are seen,
Without all ornament, itself and true,
Making no summer of another's green,
Robbing no old to dress his beauty new;
And him as for a map doth Nature store,
To show false Art what beauty was of yore.

LXIX

Those parts of thee that the world's eye doth view
Want nothing that the thought of hearts can mend;
All tongues, the voice of souls, give thee that due,
Uttering bare truth, even so as foes commend.
Thy outward thus with outward praise is crown'd;
But those same tongues that give thee so thine own
In other accents do this praise confound
By seeing farther than the eye hath shown.
They look into the beauty of thy mind,
And that, in guess, they measure by thy deeds;
Then, churls, their thoughts, although their eyes were kind,
To thy fair flower add the rank smell of weeds:
But why thy odour matcheth not thy show,
The solve is this, that thou dost common grow.

lxix. 14. *solve*, solution.

LXX

That thou art blamed shall not be thy defect,
For slander's mark was ever yet the fair;
The ornament of beauty is suspect,
A crow that flies in heaven's sweetest air.
So thou be good, slander doth but approve
Thy worth the greater, being woo'd of time;
For canker vice the sweetest buds doth love,
And thou present'st a pure unstained prime.
Thou hast pass'd by the ambush of young days,
Either not assail'd, or victor being charged;
Yet this thy praise cannot be so thy praise,
To tie up envy evermore enlarged:
If some suspect of ill mask'd not thy show,
Then thou alone kingdoms of hearts shouldst owe.

LXXI

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it; for I love you so
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O, if, I say, you look upon this verse
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
But let your love even with my life decay;
Lest the wise world should look into your moan
And mock you with me after I am gone.

lxx. 3. *suspect*, suspicion.

LXXII

O, lest the world should task you to recite
What merit lived in me that you should love,
After my death, dear love, forget me quite,
For you in me can nothing worthy prove;
Unless you would devise some virtuous lie,
To do more for me than mine own desert,
And hang more praise upon deceased I
Than niggard truth would willingly impart:
O, lest your true love may seem false in this,
That you for love speak well of me untrue,
My name be buried where my body is,
And live no more to shame nor me nor you.
For I am shamed by that which I bring forth,
And so should you, to love things nothing worth.

LXXIII

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

LXXIV

But be contented: when that fell arrest
Without all bail shall carry me away,
My life hath in this line some interest,
Which for memorial still with thee shall stay.
When thou reviewest this, thou dost review
The very part was consecrate to thee:
The earth can have but earth, which is his due;
My spirit is thine, the better part of me:
So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,
The prey of worms, my body, being dead,
The coward conquest of a wretch's knife,
Too base of thee to be remembered.
The worth of that is that which it contains,
And that is this, and this with thee remains.

LXXV

So are you to my thoughts as food to life,
Or as sweet-season'd showers are to the ground;
And for the peace of you I hold such strife
As 'twixt a miser and his wealth is found;
Now proud as an enjoyer and anon
Doubting the filching age will steal his treasure,
Now counting best to be with you alone,
Then better'd that the world may see my pleasure:
Sometime all full with feasting on your sight,
And by and by clean starved for a look;
Possessing or pursuing no delight,
Save what is had or must from you be took.
Thus do I pine and surfeit day by day,
Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

lxxiv. 11. *The coward conquest*, etc. It is doubtful whether this conceals a specific allusion. Perhaps it merely illustrates the baseness of the body, which a casual assassin avails to wreck.

LXXVI

Why is my verse so barren of new pride,
So far from variation or quick change?
Why with the time do I not glance aside
To new-found methods and to compounds strange?
Why write I still all one, ever the same,
And keep invention in a noted weed,
That every word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth and where they did proceed?
O, know, sweet love, I always write of you,
And you and love are still my argument;
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending again what is already spent:
For as the sun is daily new and old,
So is my love still telling what is told.

LXXVII

Thy glass will show thee how thy beauties wear,
Thy dial how thy precious minutes waste;
The vacant leaves thy mind's imprint will bear,
And of this book this learning mayst thou taste.
The wrinkles which thy glass will truly show
Of mouthed graves will give thee memory;
Thou by thy dial's shady stealth mayst know
Time's thievish progress to eternity.
Look, what thy memory can not contain
Commit to these waste blanks, and thou shalt find
Those children nursed, deliver'd from thy brain,
To take a new acquaintance of thy mind.
These offices, so oft as thou wilt look,
Shall profit thee and much enrich thy book.

LXXVIII

So oft have I invoked thee for my Muse
And found such fair assistance in my verse
As every alien pen hath got my use
And under thee their poesy disperse.
Thine eyes that taught the dumb on high to sing,
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
Have added feathers to the learned's wing
And given grace a double majesty.
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
Whose influence is thine and born of thee:
In others' works thou dost but mend the style,
And arts with thy sweet graces graced be;
But thou art all my art and dost advance
As high as learning my rude ignorance.

LXXIX

Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid,
My verse alone had all thy gentle grace;
But now my gracious numbers are decay'd
And my sick Muse doth give another place.
I grant, sweet love, thy lovely argument
Deserves the travail of a worthier pen;
Yet what of thee thy poet doth invent
He robs thee of, and pays it thee again.
He lends thee virtue and he stole that word
From thy behaviour; beauty doth he give
And found it in thy cheek: he can afford
No praise to thee but what in thee doth live.
Then thank him not for that which he doth say,
Since what he owes thee thou thyself dost pay.

lxxviii. 3. *As*, that.
5, 6. This is more naturally understood of Shakespeare himself than of the rival poet.

LXXX

O, how I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better spirit doth use your name,
And in the praise thereof spends all his might,
To make me tongue-tied, speaking of your fame!
But since your worth, wide as the ocean is,
The humble as the proudest sail doth bear,
My saucy bark inferior far to his
On your broad main doth wilfully appear.
Your shallowest help will hold me up afloat,
Whilst he upon your soundless deep doth ride;
Or, being wreck'd, I am a worthless boat,
He of tall building and of goodly pride:
Then if he thrive and I be cast away,
The worst was this; my love was my decay.

LXXXI

Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
Or you survive when I in earth am rotten;
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die:
The earth can yield me but a common grave,
When you entombed in men's eyes shall lie.
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read;
And tongues to be your being shall rehearse,
When all the breathers of this world are dead;
You still shall live—such virtue hath my pen—
Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths of men.

LXXXII

I grant thou wert not married to my Muse,
And therefore mayst without attaint o'erlook
The dedicated words which writers use
Of their fair subject, blessing every book.
Thou art as fair in knowledge as in hue,
Finding thy worth a limit past my praise;
And therefore art enforced to seek anew
Some fresher stamp of the time-bettering days.
And do so, love; yet when they have devised
What strained touches rhetoric can lend,
Thou truly fair wert truly sympathized
In true plain words by thy true-telling friend;
And their gross painting might be better used
Where cheeks need blood; in thee it is abused.

LXXXIII

I never saw that you did painting need,
And therefore to your fair no painting set;
I found, or thought I found, you did exceed
The barren tender of a poet's debt:
And therefore have I slept in your report,
That you yourself, being extant, well might show
How far a modern quill doth come too short,
Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow.
This silence for my sin you did impute,
Which shall be most my glory, being dumb;
For I impair not beauty being mute,
When others would give life and bring a tomb.
There lives more life in one of your fair eyes
Than both your poets can in praise devise.

lxxxii. 2. *attaint*, disgrace. 11. *sympathized*, matched.
lxxxiii. 7. *modern*, ordinary.

LXXXIV

Who is it that says most? which can say more
Than this rich praise, that you alone are you?
In whose confine immured is the store
Which should example where your equal grew.
Lean penury within that pen doth dwell
That to his subject lends not some small glory;
But he that writes of you, if he can tell
That you are you, so dignifies his story;
Let him but copy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what nature made so clear,
And such a counterpart shall fame his wit,
Making his style admired every where.
You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,
Being fond on praise, which makes your praises worse.

LXXXV

My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your praise, richly compiled,
Reserve their character with golden quill,
And precious phrase by all the Muses filed.
I think good thoughts, whilst other write good words,
And like unletter'd clerk still cry 'Amen'
To every hymn that able spirit affords
In polish'd form of well-refined pen.
Hearing you praised, I say ''Tis so, 'tis true,'
And to the most of praise add something more;
But that is in my thought, whose love to you,
Though words come hindmost, holds his rank before.
Then others for the breath of words respect,
Me for my dumb thoughts, speaking in effect.

lxxxv. 3. *Reserve.* Probably a misprint for 'rehearse,' or 'receive.'

LXXXVI

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?
Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
He, nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors of my silence cannot boast;
I was not sick of any fear from thence:
But when your countenance fill'd up his line,
Then lack'd I matter; that enfeebled mine.

LXXXVII

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate:
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?
And for that riches where is my deserving?
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
And so my patent back again is swerving.
Thyself thou gavest, thy own worth then not knowing,
Or me, to whom thou gavest it, else mistaking;
So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
Comes home again, on better judgement making.
Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter,
In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

lxxxvii. 8. *patent*, privilege.

LXXXVIII

When thou shalt be disposed to set me light
And place my merit in the eye of scorn,
Upon thy side against myself I 'll fight,
And prove thee virtuous, though thou art forsworn.
With mine own weakness being best acquainted,
Upon thy part I can set down a story
Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted;
That thou in losing me shalt win much glory:
And I by this will be a gainer too;
For bending all my loving thoughts on thee,
The injuries that to myself I do,
Doing thee vantage, double-vantage me.
  Such is my love, to thee I so belong,
  That for thy right myself will bear all wrong.

LXXXIX

Say that thou didst forsake me for some fault,
And I will comment upon that offence:
Speak of my lameness, and I straight will halt,
Against thy reasons making no defence.
Thou canst not, love, disgrace me half so ill,
To set a form upon desired change,
As I 'll myself disgrace; knowing thy will,
I will acquaintance strangle and look strange;
Be absent from thy walks; and in my tongue
Thy sweet beloved name no more shall dwell,
Lest I, too much profane, should do it wrong
And haply of our old acquaintance tell.
  For thee against myself I 'll vow debate,
  For I must ne'er love him whom thou dost hate.

lxxxix. 2. *comment upon that offence*, discourse upon that fault (of mine).

6. *set a form upon*, make a pretext for.

XC

Then hate me when thou wilt; if ever, now;
Now, while the world is bent my deeds to cross,
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,
And do not drop in for an after-loss:
Ah, do not, when my heart hath 'scaped this sorrow,
Come in the rearward of a conquer'd woe;
Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,
To linger out a purposed overthrow.
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,
When other petty griefs have done their spite,
But in the onset come: so shall I taste
At first the very worst of fortune's might,
And other strains of woe, which now seem woe,
Compared with loss of thee will not seem so.

XCI

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,
Some in their wealth, some in their bodies' force;
Some in their garments, though new-fangled ill;
Some in their hawks and hounds, some in their horse;
And every humour hath his adjunct pleasure,
Wherein it finds a joy above the rest:
But these particulars are not my measure;
All these I better in one general best.
Thy love is better than high birth to me,
Richer than wealth, prouder than garments' cost,
Of more delight than hawks or horses be;
And having thee, of all men's pride I boast:
Wretched in this alone, that thou mayst take
All this away and me most wretched make.

XC. 4. *drop in*, come in (subsequently).
8. *linger out*, prolong.

XCII

But do thy worst to steal thyself away,
For term of life thou art assured mine;
And life no longer than thy love will stay,
For it depends upon that love of thine.
Then need I not to fear the worst of wrongs,
When in the least of them my life hath end.
I see a better state to me belongs
Than that which on thy humour doth depend:
Thou canst not vex me with inconstant mind,
Since that my life on thy revolt doth lie.
O, what a happy title do I find,
Happy to have thy love, happy to die!
But what 's so blessed-fair that fears no blot?
Thou mayst be false, and yet I know it not.

XCIII

So shall I live, supposing thou art true,
Like a deceived husband; so love's face
May still seem love to me, though alter'd new;
Thy looks with me, thy heart in other place:
For there can live no hatred in thine eye,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy change.
In many's looks the false heart's history
Is writ in moods and frowns and wrinkles strange,
But heaven in thy creation did decree
That in thy face sweet love should ever dwell;
Whate'er thy thoughts or thy heart's workings be,
Thy looks should nothing thence but sweetness tell.
How like Eve's apple doth thy beauty grow,
If thy sweet virtue answer not thy show!

xciii. 14. *show*, external appearance.

XCIV

They that have power to hurt and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow;
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die,
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

XCV

How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame
Which, like a canker in the fragrant rose,
Doth spot the beauty of thy budding name!
O, in what sweets dost thou thy sins enclose!
That tongue that tells the story of thy days,
Making lascivious comments on thy sport,
Cannot dispraise but in a kind of praise;
Naming thy name blesses an ill report.
O, what a mansion have those vices got
Which for their habitation chose out thee,
Where beauty's veil doth cover every blot,
And all things turn to fair that eyes can see!
Take heed, dear heart, of this large privilege;
The hardest knife ill-used doth lose his edge.

xciv. 2. *show*, appear to do.

XCVI

Some say, thy fault is youth, some wnatonness;
Some say, thy grace is youth and gentle sport;
Both grace and faults are loved of more and less:
Thou makest faults graces that to thee resort.
As on the finger of a throned queen
The basest jewel will be well esteem'd,
So are those errors that in thee are seen
To truths translated and for true things deem'd.
How many lambs might the stern wolf betray,
If like a lamb he could his looks translate!
How many gazers mightst thou lead away,
If thou wouldst use the strength of all thy state!
But do not so; I love thee in such sort
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

XCVII

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness every where!
And yet this time removed was summer's time;
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widow'd wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very birds are mute;
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

XCVIII

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play:

XCIX

The forward violet thus did I chide:
Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that smells,
If not from my love's breath? The purple pride
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells
In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed.
The lily I condemned for thy hand,
And buds of marjoram had stol'n thy hair;
The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,
One blushing shame, another white despair;
A third, nor red nor white, had stol'n of both
And to his robbery had annex'd thy breath;
But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth
A vengeful canker eat him up to death.
More flowers I noted, yet I none could see
But sweet or colour it had stol'n from thee.

C

Where art thou, Muse, that thou forget'st so long
To speak of that which gives thee all thy might?
Spend'st thou thy fury on some worthless song,
Darkening thy power to lend base subjects light?
Return, forgetful Muse, and straight redeem
In gentle numbers time so idly spent;
Sing to the ear that doth thy lays esteem
And gives thy pen both skill and argument.
Rise, resty Muse, my love's sweet face survey,
If Time have any wrinkle graven there;
If any, be a satire to decay,
And make Time's spoils despised every where.
Give my love fame faster than Time wastes life;
So thou prevent'st his scythe and crooked knife.

CI

O truant Muse, what shall be thy amends
For thy neglect of truth in beauty dyed?
Both truth and beauty on my love depends;
So dost thou too, and therein dignified.
Make answer, Muse: wilt thou not haply say
'Truth needs no colour, with his colour fix'd;
Beauty no pencil, beauty's truth to lay;
But best is best, if never intermix'd'?
Because he needs no praise, wilt thou be dumb?
Excuse not silence so, for 't lies in thee
To make him much outlive a gilded tomb,
And to be praised of ages yet to be.
Then do thy office, Muse; I teach thee how
To make him seem long hence as he shows now.

c. 9. *resty*, torpid with too much rest.

CII

My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in
seeming;
I love not less, though less the show appear:
That love is merchandized whose rich esteeming
The owner's tongue doth publish every where.
Our love was new, and then but in the spring
When I was wont to greet it with my lays;
As Philomel in summer's front doth sing,
And stops her pipe in growth of riper days:
Not that the summer is less pleasant now
Than when her mournful hymns did hush the night,
But that wild music burthens every bough,
And sweets grown common lose their dear delight.
Therefore, like her, I sometime hold my tongue,
Because I would not dull you with my song.

CIII

Alack, what poverty my Muse brings forth,
That having such a scope to show her pride,
The argument, all bare, is of more worth
Than when it hath my added praise beside!
O, blame me not, if I no more can write!
Look in your glass, and there appears a face
That over-goes my blunt invention quite,
Dulling my lines and doing me disgrace.
Were it not sinful then, striving to mend,
To mar the subject that before was well?
For to no other pass my verses tend
Than of your graces and your gifts to tell;
And more, much more, than in my verse can sit
Your own glass shows you when you look in it.

cii. 14. *dull*, weary.

CIV

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride,
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah, yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion and mine eye may be deceived:
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred;
Ere you were born was beauty's summer dead.

CV

Let not my love be call'd idolatry,
Nor my beloved as an idol show,
Since all alike my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such, and ever so.
Kind is my love to-day, to-morrow kind,
Still constant in a wondrous excellence;
Therefore my verse to constancy confined,
One thing expressing, leaves out difference.
'Fair, kind, and true' is all my argument,
'Fair, kind, and true' varying to other words;
And in this change is my invention spent,
Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords.
'Fair, kind, and true,' have often lived alone,
Which three till now never kept seat in one.

CVI

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have express'd
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;
And, for they look'd but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

CVII

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control,
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.
The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,
And the sad augurs mock their own presage;
Incertainties now crown themselves assured
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
Now with the drops of this most balmy time
My love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes,
Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes:
And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

cvii. 5-8. Perhaps an allusion to the death of Elizabeth; cf. Introduction.

10. *subscribes*, submits.

12. *insults o'er*, triumphs over (the dead).

CVIII

What 's in the brain that ink may character
Which hath not figured to thee my true spirit?
What 's new to speak, what new to register,
That may express my love or thy dear merit?
Nothing, sweet boy; but yet, like prayers divine,
I must each day say o'er the very same,
Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
Even as when first I hallow'd thy fair name.
So that eternal love in love's fresh case
Weighs not the dust and injury of age,
Nor gives to necessary wrinkles place,
But makes antiquity for aye his page;
Finding the first conceit of love there bred
Where time and outward form would show it dead.

CIX

O, never say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify.
As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie:
That is my home of love: if I have ranged,
Like him that travels I return again,
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reign'd
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stain'd,
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good;
For nothing this wide universe I call,
Save thou, my rose; in it thou art my all.

cviii. 2. *figured*, imaged. cix. 7. *Just*, punctual.
cix. 7. *exchanged*, altered.

CX

Alas, 'tis true I have gone here and there
And made myself a motley to the view,
Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most
dear,
Made old offences of affections new;
Most true it is that I have look'd on truth
Askance and strangely: but, by all above,
These blenches gave my heart another youth,
And worse essays proved thee my best of love.
Now all is done, have what shall have no end:
Mine appetite I never more will grind
On newer proof, to try an older friend,
A god in love, to whom I am confined.
Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,
Even to thy pure and most most loving breast.

CXI

O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide
Than public means which public manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand;
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand:
Pity me then and wish I were renew'd;
Whilst, like a willing patient, I will drink
Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection;
No bitterness that I will bitter think,
Nor double penance, to correct correction.
Pity me then, dear friend, and I assure ye
Even that your pity is enough to cure me.

cx. 2. *motley*, a common jester.
7. *blenches*, sudden changes.
8. *worse essays*, trials of worse things.
cxi. 10. *eisel*, vinegar, which was considered a prophylactic for plague. L.

CXII

Your love and pity doth the impression fill
Which vulgar scandal stamp'd upon my brow;
For what care I who calls me well or ill,
So you o'er-green my bad, my good allow?
You are my all the world, and I must strive
To know my shames and praises from your tongue;
None else to me, nor I to none alive,
That my steel'd sense or changes right or wrong.
In so profound abysm I throw all care
Of others' voices, that my adder's sense
To critic and to flatterer stopped are.
Mark how with my neglect I do dispense:
  You are so strongly in my purpose bred
  That all the world besides methinks are dead.

CXIII

Since I left you, mine eye is in my mind,
And that which governs me to go about
Doth part his function and is partly blind,
Seems seeing, but effectually is out;
For it no form delivers to the heart
Of bird, of flower, or shape, which it doth latch:
Of his quick objects hath the mind no part,
Nor his own vision holds what it doth catch;
For if it see the rudest or gentlest sight,
The most sweet favour or deformed'st creature,
The mountain or the sea, the day or night,
The crow or dove, it shapes them to your feature:
  Incapable of more, replete with you,
  My most true mind thus makes mine eye untrue.

cxii. 8. *or changes right or wrong*, accepts criticism from just or unjust.

cxiii. 6. *latch*, seize, perceive.

CXIV

Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you,
Drink up the monarch's plague, this flattery?
Or whether shall I say, mine eye saith true,
And that your love taught it this alchemy,
To make of monsters and things indigest
Such cherubins as your sweet self resemble,
Creating every bad a perfect best,
As fast as objects to his beams assemble?
O, 'tis the first; 'tis flattery in my seeing,
And my great mind most kingly drinks it up:
Mine eye well knows what with his gust is 'greeing,
And to his palate doth prepare the cup:
If it be poison'd, 'tis the lesser sin
That mine eye loves it and doth first begin.

CXV

Those lines that I before have writ do lie,
Even those that said I could not love you dearer:
Yet then my judgement knew no reason why
My most full flame should afterwards burn clearer.
But reckoning Time, whose million'd accidents
Creep in 'twixt vows and change decrees of kings,
Tan sacred beauty, blunt the sharp'st intents,
Divert strong minds to the course of altering things;
Alas, why, fearing of Time's tyranny,
Might I not then say 'Now I love you best,'
When I was certain o'er incertainty,
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest?
Love is a babe; then might I not say so,
To give full growth to that which still doth grow?

CXIV. 11. *gust*, taste.
CXV. 7. *Tan*, spoil the freshness of.

CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

CXVII

Accuse me thus: that I have scanted all
Wherein I should your great deserts repay;
Forgot upon your dearest love to call,
Whereto all bonds do tie me day by day;
That I have frequent been with unknown minds,
And given to time your own dear-purchased right;
That I have hoisted sail to all the winds
Which should transport me farthest from your sight.
Book both my wilfulness and errors down,
And on just proof surmise accumulate;
Bring me within the level of your frown,
But shoot not at me in your waken'd hate;
Since my appeal says I did strive to prove
The constancy and virtue of your love.

cxvi. 8. *Whose worth's unknown*, etc.; 'worth' probably refers to the occult virtue and influence of the star, discoverable only by observation and calculation.

CXVIII

Like as, to make our appetites more keen,
With eager compounds we our palate urge;
As, to prevent our maladies unseen,
We sicken to shun sickness when we purge,
Even so, being full of your ne'er-cloying sweetness,
To bitter sauces did I frame my feeding;
And, sick of welfare, found a kind of meetness
To be diseased ere that there was true needing.
Thus policy in love, to anticipate
The ills that were not, grew to faults assured,
And brought to medicine a healthful state
Which, rank of goodness, would by ill be cured:
But thence I learn, and find the lesson true,
Drugs poison him that so fell sick of you.

CXIX

What potions have I drunk of Siren tears,
Distill'd from limbecks foul as hell within,
Applying fears to hopes and hopes to fears,
Still losing when I saw myself to win!
What wretched errors hath my heart committed,
Whilst it hath thought itself so blessed never!
How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted
In the distraction of this madding fever!
O benefit of ill! now I find true
That better is by evil still made better;
And ruin'd love, when it is built anew,
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.
So I return rebuked to my content,
And gain by ill thrice more than I have spent.

cxix. 2. *limbecks*, alembics, stills. 7. *been fitted*, started from my eyes in the fever-fits.

CXX

That you were once unkind befriends me now,
And for that sorrow which I then did feel
Needs must I under my transgression bow,
Unless my nerves were brass or hammer'd steel.
For if you were by my unkindness shaken,
As I by yours, you 've pass'd a hell of time;
And I, a tyrant, have no leisure taken
To weigh how once I suffer'd in your crime.
O, that our night of woe might have remember'd
My deepest sense, how hard true sorrow hits,
And soon to you, as you to me, then tender'd
The humble salve which wounded bosoms fits!
But that your trespass now becomes a fee;
Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransom me.

CXXI

'Tis better to be vile than vile esteem'd,
When not to be receives reproach of being;
And the just pleasure lost which is so deem'd
Not by our feeling, but by others' seeing:
For why should others' false adulterate eyes
Give salutation to my sportive blood?
Or on my frailties why are frailer spies,
Which in their wills count bad what I think good?
No, I am that I am, and they that level
At my abuses reckon up their own:
I may be straight, though they themselves be bevel;
By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shown;
Unless this general evil they maintain,
All men are bad, and in their badness reign.

CXX. 9. *remember'd*, reminded. 9. *level*, aim. 13. *fee*, pledge.

CXXI. 6. *Give salutation to*, affect, stir. 11. *bevel*, lit. slanting; here crooked.

CXXII

Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain
Full character'd with lasting memory,
Which shall above that idle rank remain
Beyond all date, even to eternity;
Or at the least, so long as brain and heart
Have faculty by nature to subsist;
Till each to razed oblivion yield his part
Of thee, thy record never can be miss'd.
That poor retention could not so much hold,
Nor need I tallies thy dear love to score;
Therefore to give them from me was I bold,
To trust those tables that receive thee more:
To keep an adjunct to remember thee
Were to import forgetfulness in me.

CXXIII

No, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change:
Thy pyramids built up with newer might
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange;
They are but dressings of a former sight.
Our dates are brief, and therefore we admire
What thou dost foist upon us that is old;
And rather make them born to our desire
Than think that we before have heard them told.
Thy registers and thee I both defy,
Not wondering at the present nor the past,
For thy records and what we see doth lie,
Made more or less by thy continual haste.
This I do vow and this shall ever be;
I will be true, despite thy scythe and thee.

cxxii. 1. *tables*, writing-tablets.
3. *that idle rank*, the poor dignity of such 'tables.'

cxxiii. 2. *Thy pyramids*, 'all that Time piles up from day to day,' new structures of event.
5. *admire*, wonder at.

cxxiv. 1. *state*, outward (and passing) conditions; cf. cxxv. 5.
cxxiv. 11. *all alone*, etc., *i.e.* its 'policy' is grounded in itself, and therefore remains constant while it endures.
cxxiv. 13, 14. This is obscure.

CXXIV

If my dear love were but the child of state,
It might for Fortune's bastard be unfather'd,
As subject to Time's love or to Time's hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gather'd.
No, it was builded far from accident;
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
Under the blow of thralled discontent,
Whereto the inviting time our fashion calls:
It fears not policy,—that heretic,
Which works on leases of short-number'd hours,—
But all alone stands hugely politic,
That it nor grows with heat nor drowns with showers.
To this I witness call the fools of time,
Which die for goodness, who have lived for crime.

CXXV

Were 't aught to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honouring,
Or laid great bases for eternity,
Which prove more short than waste or ruining?
Have I not seen dwellers on form and favour
Lose all, and more, by paying too much rent,
For compound sweet forgoing simple savour,
Pitiful thrivers, in their gazing spent?
No, let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation, poor but free,
Which is not mix'd with seconds, knows no art,
But mutual render, only me for thee.
Hence, thou suborn'd informer! a true soul
When most impeach'd stands least in thy control.

Dowden suggests as a paraphrase: 'I call to witness the transitory unworthy loves, whose death was a virtue since their life was a crime.'

CXXV. 1. *bore the canopy*, i.e. rendered outward homage.

11. *seconds*, baser quality (lit. flour of second or inferior kind).

13. *thou suborn'd informer*; cf. CXXI. 7. But the phrase may be a figure for 'Jealousy,' who is called 'sour informer' in *Venus and Adonis*, 655.

CXXVI

O thou, my lovely boy, who in thy power
Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his sickle, hour;
Who hast by waning grown, and therein show'st
Thy lovers withering as thy sweet self grow'st;
If Nature, sovereign mistress over wrack,
As thou goest onwards, still will pluck thee back,
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill
May time disgrace and wretched minutes kill.
Yet fear her, O thou minion of her pleasure!
She may detain, but not still keep, her treasure:
Her audit, though delay'd, answer'd must be,
And her quietus is to render thee.

CXXVII

In the old age black was not counted fair,
Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name;
But now is black beauty's successive heir,
And beauty slander'd with a bastard shame:
For since each hand hath put on nature's power,
Fairing the foul with art's false borrow'd face,
Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,
But is profaned, if not lives in disgrace.
Therefore my mistress' brows are raven black,
Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem
At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,
Slandering creation with a false esteem:
Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,
That every tongue says beauty should look so.

cxxvi. This poem of twelve lines concludes the first sequence; it may originally have concluded the series which ends at xcix., forming a 'century.' The surreptitious compiler, regarding it as a sonnet, supposed two lines to be lost, and marked the omission with brackets.

12. *quietus*, the technical term for the quittance which every sheriff received on settling his accounts at the Exchequer.

12. *render thee*, yield thee up.

cxxvii. 9. *brows*; Staunton's conjecture for the *eyes* of the Quartos.

CXXVIII

How oft, when thou, my music, music play'st,
Upon that blessed wood whose motion sounds
With thy sweet fingers, when thou gently sway'st
The wiry concord that mine ear confounds,
Do I envy those jacks that nimble leap
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand,
Whilst my poor lips, which should that harvest reap,
At the wood's boldness by thee blushing stand!
To be so tickled, they would change their state
And situation with those dancing chips,
O'er whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait,
Making dead wood more blest than living lips.
Since saucy jacks so happy are in this,
Give them thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss.

CXXIX

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight;
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had,
Past reason hated, as a swallow'd bait,
On purpose laid to make the taker mad:
Mad in pursuit and in possession so;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.
All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

cxxviii. 5. *jacks*, the keys of the virginal.

cxxix. 11. *proved, a very;* Qq read 'proud and very.'

CXXX

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red:
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound:
I grant I never saw a goddess go,
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

CXXXI

Thou art as tyrannous, so as thou art,
As those whose beauties proudly make them cruel;
For well thou know'st to my dear doting heart
Thou art the fairest and most precious jewel.
Yet, in good faith, some say that thee behold
Thy face hath not the power to make love groan:
To say they err I dare not be so bold,
Although I swear it to myself alone.
And, to be sure that is not false I swear,
A thousand groans, but thinking on thy face,
One on another's neck, do witness bear
Thy black is fairest in my judgement's place.
In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds,
And thence this slander, as I think, proceeds.

cxxx. 14. *she*, used substantively, as often.

CXXXII

Thine eyes I love, and they, as pitying me,
Knowing thy heart torments me with disdain,
Have put on black and loving mourners be,
Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain.
And truly not the morning sun of heaven
Better becomes the grey cheeks of the east,
Nor that full star that ushers in the even
Doth half that glory to the sober west,
As those two mourning eyes become thy face:
O, let it then as well beseem thy heart
To mourn for me, since mourning doth thee grace,
And suit thy pity like in every part.
Then will I swear beauty herself is black
And all they foul that thy complexion lack.

CXXXIII

Beshrew that heart that makes my heart to groan
For that deep wound it gives my friend and me!
Is 't not enough to torture me alone,
But slave to slavery my sweet'st friend must be?
Me from myself thy cruel eye hath taken,
And my next self thou harder hast engross'd:
Of him, myself, and thee, I am forsaken;
A torment thrice threefold thus to be cross'd.
Prison my heart in thy steel bosom's ward,
But then my friend's heart let my poor heart bail;
Whoe'er keeps me, let my heart be his guard;
Thou canst not then use rigour in my gaol:
And yet thou wilt; for I, being pent in thee,
Perforce am thine, and all that is in me.

CXXXIV

So, now I have confess'd that he is thine
And I myself am mortgaged to thy will,
Myself I 'll forfeit, so that other mine
Thou wilt restore, to be my comfort still:
But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free,
For thou art covetous and he is kind;
He learn'd but surety-like to write for me,
Under that bond that him as fast doth bind.
The statute of thy beauty thou wilt take,
Thou usurer, that put'st forth all to use,
And sue a friend came debtor for my sake;
So him I lose through my unkind abuse.
Him have I lost; thou hast both him and me:
He pays the whole, and yet am I not free.

CXXXV

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy 'Will,'
And 'Will' to boot, and 'Will' in overplus;
More than enough am I that vex thee still,
To thy sweet will making addition thus.
Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?
Shall will in others seem right gracious,
And in my will no fair acceptance shine?
The sea, all water, yet receives rain still
And in abundance addeth to his store;
So thou, being rich in 'Will,' add to thy 'Will'
One will of mine, to make thy large 'Will' more.
Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill;
Think all but one, and me in that one 'Will.'

cxxxv. 13. *Let no unkind* '*No*,' Dowden's suggestion for 'no unkind, no.' Rossetti proposed 'skill' (for 'kill') with the meaning 'avail.'

CXXXVI

If thy soul check thee that I come so near,
Swear to thy blind soul that I was thy 'Will,'
And will, thy soul knows, is admitted there;
Thus far for love my love-suit, sweet, fulfil.
'Will' will fulfil the treasure of thy love,
Ay, fill it full with wills, and my will one.
In things of great receipt with ease we prove
Among a number one is reckon'd none:
Then in the number let me pass untold,
Though in thy stores' account I one must be;
For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold
That nothing me, a something sweet to thee:
Make but my name thy love, and love that still,
And then thou lovest me, for my name is 'Will.'

CXXXVII

Thou blind fool, Love, what dost thou to mine eyes,
That they behold, and see not what they see?
They know what beauty is, see where it lies,
Yet what the best is take the worst to be.
If eyes corrupt by over-partial looks
Be anchor'd in the bay where all men ride,
Why of eyes' falsehood hast thou forged hooks,
Whereto the judgement of my heart is tied?
Why should my heart think that a several plot
Which my heart knows the wide world's common place?
Or mine eyes seeing this, say this is not,
To put fair truth upon so foul a face?
In things right true my heart and eyes have erred,
And to this false plague are they now transferr'd.

CXXXVI. 1. *check*, chide.

8. *Among a number*, etc.; a proverb. Cf. *Hero and Leand.* i.: One is no number; maids are nothing then
Without the sweet society of men.
L.

CXXXVII. 9. *several*, private, enclosed, ground, as opposed to *commons*.

CXXXVIII

When my love swears that she is made of truth
I do believe her, though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue:
On both sides thus is simple truth suppress'd.
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love loves not to have years told:
Therefore I lie with her and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.

CXXXIX

O, call not me to justify the wrong
That thy unkindness lays upon my heart;
Wound me not with thine eye but with thy tongue;
Use power with power and slay me not by art.
Tell me thou lovest elsewhere; but in my sight,
Dear heart, forbear to glance thine eye aside:
What need'st thou wound with cunning when thy might
Is more than my o'er-press'd defence can bide?
Let me excuse thee: ah! my love well knows
Her pretty looks have been mine enemies,
And therefore from my face she turns my foes,
That they elsewhere might dart their injuries:
Yet do not so; but since I am near slain,
Kill me outright with looks and rid my pain.

cxxxix. 14. *rid*, deliver me of.

CXL

Be wise as thou art cruel; do not press
My tongue-tied patience with too much disdain;
Lest sorrow lend me words and words express
The manner of my pity-wanting pain.
If I might teach thee wit, better it were,
Though not to love, yet, love, to tell me so;
As testy sick men, when their deaths be near,
No news but health from their physicians know;
For if I should despair, I should grow mad,
And in my madness might speak ill of thee:
Now this ill-wresting world is grown so bad,
Mad slanderers by mad ears believed be.
That I may not be so, nor thou belied,
Bear thine eyes straight, though thy proud heart go wide.

CXLI

In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes,
For they in thee a thousand errors note;
But 'tis my heart that loves what they despise,
Who in despite of view is pleased to dote;
Nor are mine ears with thy tongue's tune delighted;
Nor tender feeling, to base touches prone,
Nor taste, nor smell, desire to be invited
To any sensual feast with thee alone:
But my five wits nor my five senses can
Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee,
Who leaves unsway'd the likeness of a man,
Thy proud heart's slave and vassal wretch to be:
Only my plague thus far I count my gain,
That she that makes me sin awards me pain.

cxl. 11. *ill-wresting*, twisting to an evil meaning.

cxli. 6. *base touches*, sensual commerce.

9. *five wits*; they were currently understood to be 'common wit,' 'imagination,' 'fantasy,' 'estimation,' 'memory.'

CXLII

Love is my sin and thy dear virtue hate,
Hate of my sin, grounded on sinful loving:
O, but with mine compare thou thine own state,
And thou shalt find it merits not reproving;
Or, if it do, not from those lips of thine,
That have profaned their scarlet ornaments
And seal'd false bonds of love as oft as mine,
Robb'd others' beds' revenues of their rents.
Be it lawful I love thee, as thou lovest those
Whom thine eyes woo as mine importune thee:
Root pity in thy heart, that when it grows
Thy pity may deserve to pitied be.
If thou dost seek to have what thou dost hide,
By self-example mayst thou be denied!

CXLIII

Lo! as a careful housewife runs to catch
One of her feather'd creatures broke away,
Sets down her babe, and makes all swift dispatch
In pursuit of the thing she would have stay;
Whilst her neglected child holds her in chase,
Cries to catch her whose busy care is bent
To follow that which flies before her face,
Not prizing her poor infant's discontent:
So runn'st thou after that which flies from thee,
Whilst I thy babe chase thee afar behind;
But if thou catch thy hope, turn back to me,
And play the mother's part, kiss me, be kind:
So will I pray that thou mayst have thy 'Will,'
If thou turn back, and my loud crying still.

CXLIV

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
Which like two spirits do suggest me still:
The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.
To win me soon to hell, my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell;
But being both from me, both to each friend,
I guess one angel in another's hell:
Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

CXLV

Those lips that Love's own hand did make
Breathed forth the sound that said 'I hate'
To me that languish'd for her sake;
But when she saw my woeful state,
Straight in her heart did mercy come,
Chiding that tongue that ever sweet
Was used in giving gentle doom,
And taught it thus anew to greet;
'I hate' she alter'd with an end,
That follow'd it as gentle day
Doth follow night, who like a fiend
From heaven to hell is flown away;
'I hate' from hate away she threw,
And saved my life, saying 'not you.'

cxlv. The only sonnet in octosyllabic measure.

CXLVI

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
. . . these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And Death once dead, there 's no more dying then.

CXLVII

My love is as a fever, longing still
For that which longer nurseth the disease;
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,
The uncertain sickly appetite to please.
My reason, the physician to my love,
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,
Hath left me, and I desperate now approve
Desire is death, which physic did except.
Past cure I am, now reason is past care,
And frantic-mad with evermore unrest;
My thoughts and my discourse as madmen's are,
At random from the truth vainly express'd;
For I have sworn thee fair and thought thee bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.

cxlvi. 2. Dowden fills the gap with 'Press'd by,' Malone with 'Fool'd by,' Steevens with 'Starv'd by.' Query: 'Lord of.'
2. *array*, clothe.
10. *aggravate*, increase.
11. *terms divine*, eternity.
cxlvii. 7. *approve*, find by experience.
8. *except*, refuse.
10. *evermore*; adv. used for adj.

CXLVIII

O me, what eyes hath Love put in my head,
Which have no correspondence with true sight!
Or, if they have, where is my judgement fled,
That censures falsely what they see aright?
If that be fair whereon my false eyes dote,
What means the world to say it is not so?
If it be not, then love doth well denote
Love's eye is not so true as all men's: No.
How can it? O, how can Love's eye be true,
That is so vex'd with watching and with tears?
No marvel then, though I mistake my view;
The sun itself sees not till heaven clears.
O cunning Love! with tears thou keep'st me blind,
Lest eyes well-seeing thy foul faults should find.

CXLIX

Canst thou, O cruel! say I love thee not,
When I against myself with thee partake?
Do I not think on thee, when I forgot
Am of myself, all tyrant, for thy sake?
Who hateth thee that I do call my friend?
On whom frown'st thou that I do fawn upon?
Nay, if thou lour'st on me, do I not spend
Revenge upon myself with present moan?
What merit do I in myself respect,
That is so proud thy service to despise,
When all my best doth worship thy defect,
Commanded by the motion of thine eyes?
But, love, hate on, for now I know thy mind;
Those that can see thou lovest, and I am blind.

cxlviii. 8. *Love's eye*, etc. A rather awkward pun is apparently intended between 'eye' and 'ay' (both expressed in the old text by 'I'); the former meaning requiring a full stop at 'men's,' the latter at 'No.'

CL

O, from what power hast thou this powerful might
With insufficiency my heart to sway?
To make me give the lie to my true sight,
And swear that brightness doth not grace the day?
Whence hast thou this becoming of things ill,
That in the very refuse of thy deeds
There is such strength and warrantise of skill
That, in my mind, thy worst all best exceeds?
Who taught thee how to make me love thee more
The more I hear and see just cause of hate?
O, though I love what others do abhor,
With others thou shouldst not abhor my state:
If thy unworthiness raised love in me,
More worthy I to be beloved of thee.

CLI

Love is too young to know what conscience is;
Yet who knows not conscience is born of love?
Then, gentle cheater, urge not my amiss,
Lest guilty of my faults thy sweet self prove:
For, thou betraying me, I do betray
My nobler part to my gross body's treason;
My soul doth tell my body that he may
Triumph in love; flesh stays no farther reason,
But, rising at thy name, doth point out thee
As his triumphant prize. Proud of this pride,
He is contented thy poor drudge to be,
To stand in thy affairs, fall by thy side.
No want of conscience hold it that I call
Her 'love' for whose dear love I rise and fall.

cl. 7. *warrantise*, warrant.

CLII

In loving thee thou know'st I am forsworn,
But thou art twice forsworn, to me love swearing;
In act thy bed-vow broke and new faith torn
In vowing new hate after new love bearing.
But why of two oaths' breach do I accuse thee,
When I break twenty? I am perjured most;
For all my vows are oaths but to misuse thee,
And all my honest faith in thee is lost,
For I have sworn deep oaths of thy deep kindness,
Oaths of thy love, thy truth, thy constancy;
And, to enlighten thee, gave eyes to blindness,
Or made them swear against the thing they see;
For I have sworn thee fair; more perjured I,
To swear against the truth so foul a lie!

CLIII

Cupid laid by his brand, and fell asleep:
A maid of Dian's this advantage found,
And his love-kindling fire did quickly steep
In a cold valley-fountain of that ground;
Which borrow'd from this holy fire of Love
A dateless lively heat, still to endure,
And grew a seething bath, which yet men prove
Against strange maladies a sovereign cure.
But at my mistress' eye Love's brand new-fired,
The boy for trial needs would touch my breast;
I, sick withal, the help of bath desired,
And thither hied, a sad distemper'd guest,
But found no cure: the bath for my help lies
Where Cupid got new fire—my mistress' eyes.

cliii. cliv. These sonnets have probably no direct connexion with the sequences preceding. They are suggested (as W.

CLIV

The little Love-god lying once asleep
Laid by his side his heart-inflaming brand,
Whilst many nymphs that vow'd chaste life to keep
Came tripping by; but in her maiden hand
The fairest votary took up that fire
Which many legions of true hearts had warm'd;
And so the general of hot desire
Was sleeping by a virgin hand disarm'd.
This brand she quenched in a cool well by,
Which from Love's fire took heat perpetual,
Growing a bath and healthful remedy
For men diseased; but I, my mistress' thrall,
Came there for cure, and this by that I prove,
Love's fire heats water, water cools not love.

Herzberg was the first to point out) by the following Epigram of the Palatine Anthology, which Shakespeare may have seen in Latin translation:—

τᾷδ' ὑπὸ τὰς πλατάνους ἁπαλῷ τετρυμένος ὕπνῳ
εὗδεν Ἔρως, νύμφαις λαμπάδα παρθέμενος.

cliv. 7. *general*, lord.

A LOVER'S COMPLAINT

INTRODUCTION

THIS piece first appeared at the close of the volume containing the *Sonnets*, in 1609. No contemporary allusion to it is known; and Shakespeare's authorship rests largely upon its inclusion in this volume. Yet internal evidence connects it closely with the *Venus*, with the *Lucrece*, and with the *Sonnets* themselves. Its theme, like theirs, is derived from phases of relation between men and women which in the dramas he habitually avoided, or which he touched only incidentally, as in Bertram and Viola. The 'lover' is a less innocent Lucrece; her ravisher no Tarquin but a Don Juan, whose weapons are fascination and persuasion. The *Lucrece* touches the borders of historical tragedy; *A Lover's Complaint* belongs to the gentler world of literary Pastoral, which Shakespeare—if this be indeed his work—nowhere else approached but to set it in annihilating conjunction with his own poetic realism, as in *As You Like It*, or to entirely transmute and transform it with a supremely beautiful Pastoral of his own, as in *The Winter's Tale*.

A LOVER'S COMPLAINT

From off a hill whose concave womb re-worded
A plaintful story from a sistering vale,
My spirits to attend this double voice accorded,
And down I laid to list the sad-tuned tale;
Ere long espied a fickle maid full pale,
Tearing of papers, breaking rings a-twain,
Storming her world with sorrow's wind and rain.

Upon her head a platted hive of straw,
Which fortified her visage from the sun,
Whereon the thought might think sometime it saw
The carcass of a beauty spent and done:
Time had not scythed all that youth begun,
Nor youth all quit; but, spite of heaven's fell rage,
Some beauty peep'd through lattice of sear'd age.

Oft did she heave her napkin to her eyne,
Which on it had conceited characters,
Laundering the silken figures in the brine
That season'd woe had pelleted in tears,
And often reading what contents it bears;
As often shrieking undistinguish'd woe,
In clamours of all size, both high and low.

1. *re-worded*, re-echoed.
2. *sistering*, neighbouring.
8. *hive*, a straw bonnet like a bee-hive.
16. *conceited*, fanciful.
17. *Laundering*, washing.

Sometimes her levell'd eyes their carriage ride,
As they did battery to the spheres intend;
Sometime diverted their poor balls are tied
To the orbed earth; sometimes they do extend
Their view right on; anon their gazes lend
To every place at once, and, nowhere fix'd,
The mind and sight distractedly commix'd.

Her hair, nor loose nor tied in formal plat,
Proclaim'd in her a careless hand of pride;
For some, untuck'd, descended her sheaved hat,
Hanging her pale and pined cheek beside;
Some in her threaden fillet still did bide,
And true to bondage would not break from thence,
Though slackly braided in loose negligence.

A thousand favours from a maund she drew
Of amber, crystal, and of beaded jet,
Which one by one she in a river threw,
Upon whose weeping margent she was set;
Like usury, applying wet to wet,
Or monarch's hands that let not bounty fall
Where want cries some, but where excess begs all.

Of folded schedules had she many a one,
Which she perused, sigh'd, tore, and gave the flood;
Crack'd many a ring of posied gold and bone,
Bidding them find their sepulchres in mud;
Found yet moe letters sadly penn'd in blood,
With sleided silk feat and affectedly
Enswathed, and seal'd to curious secrecy.

These often bathed she in her fluxive eyes,
And often kiss'd, and often 'gan to tear;
Cried 'O false blood, thou register of lies,

36. *maund*, basket. 48. *sleided*, untwisted.

A Lover's Complaint

What unapproved witness dost thou bear!
Ink would have seem'd more black and damned
here!'
This said, in top of rage the lines she rents,
Big discontent so breaking their contents.

A reverend man that grazed his cattle nigh—
Sometime a blusterer, that the ruffle knew
Of court, of city, and had let go by
The swiftest hours, observed as they flew—
Towards this afflicted fancy fastly drew,
And, privileged by age, desires to know
In brief the grounds and motives of her woe.

So slides he down upon his grained bat,
And comely-distant sits he by her side;
When he again desires her, being sat,
Her grievance with his hearing to divide:
If that from him there may be aught applied
Which may her suffering ecstasy assuage,
'Tis promised in the charity of age.

'Father,' she says, 'though in me you behold
The injury of many a blasting hour,
Let it not tell your judgement I am old;
Not age, but sorrow, over me hath power:
I might as yet have been a spreading flower,
Fresh to myself, if I had self-applied
Love to myself and to no love beside.

'But, woe is me! too early I attended
A youthful suit—it was to gain my grace—
Of one by nature's outwards so commended,

58. *blusterer*, a boisterous fellow.
58. *ruffle*, turmoil.
64. *bat*, a heavy stick.

That maidens' eyes stuck over all his face:
Love lack'd a dwelling, and made him her place;
And when in his fair parts she did abide,
She was new lodged and newly deified.

'His browny locks did hang in crooked curls;
And every light occasion of the wind
Upon his lips their silken parcels hurls.
What 's sweet to do, to do will aptly find:
Each eye that saw him did enchant the mind,
For on his visage was in little drawn
What largeness thinks in Paradise was sawn.

'Small show of man was yet upon his chin;
His phœnix down began but to appear
Like unshorn velvet on that termless skin
Whose bare out-bragg'd the web it seem'd to wear:
Yet show'd his visage by that cost more dear;
And nice affections wavering stood in doubt
If best were as it was, or best without.

'His qualities were beauteous as his form,
For maiden-tongued he was, and thereof free;
Yet, if men moved him, was he such a storm
As oft 'twixt May and April is to see,
When winds breathe sweet, unruly though they be.
His rudeness so with his authorized youth
Did livery falseness in a pride of truth.

'Well could he ride, and often men would say
"That horse his mettle from his rider takes:
Proud of subjection, noble by the sway,
What rounds, what bounds, what course, what
stop he makes!"
And controversy hence a question takes,

91. *sawn*; probably for *sown*.

Whether the horse by him became his deed,
Or he his manage by the well-doing steed.

'But quickly on this side the verdict went:
His real habitude gave life and grace
To appertainings and to ornament,
Accomplish'd in himself, not in his case:
All aids, themselves made fairer by their place,
Came for additions; yet their purposed trim
Pieced not his grace, but were all graced by him.

'So on the tip of his subduing tongue
All kind of arguments and question deep,
All replication prompt, and reason strong,
For his advantage still did wake and sleep:
To make the weeper laugh, the laugher weep,
He had the dialect and different skill,
Catching all passions in his craft of will:

'That he did in the general bosom reign
Of young, of old; and sexes both enchanted,
To dwell with him in thoughts, or to remain
In personal duty, following where he haunted:
Consents bewitch'd, ere he desire, have granted,
And dialogued for him what he would say,
Ask'd their own wills, and made their wills obey.

'Many there were that did his picture get,
To serve their eyes, and in it put their mind;
Like fools that in th' imagination set
The goodly objects which abroad they find
Of lands and mansions, theirs in thought assign'd:
And labouring in moe pleasures to bestow them
Than the true gouty landlord which doth owe them:

112. *manage*, handling of a horse. 116. *case*, dress.

'So many have, that never touch'd his hand,
Sweetly supposed them mistress of his heart.
My woeful self, that did in freedom stand,
And was my own fee-simple, not in part,
What with his art in youth, and youth in art,
Threw my affections in his charmed power,
Reserved the stalk and gave him all my flower.

'Yet did I not, as some my equals did,
Demand of him, nor being desired yielded;
Finding myself in honour so forbid,
With safest distance I mine honour shielded:
Experience for me many bulwarks builded
Of proofs new-bleeding, which remain'd the foil
Of this false jewel, and his amorous spoil.

'But, ah, who ever shunn'd by precedent
The destined ill she must herself assay?
Or forced examples, 'gainst her own content,
To put the by-past perils in her way?
Counsel may stop awhile what will not stay;
For when we rage, advice is often seen
By blunting us to make our wits more keen.

'Nor gives it satisfaction to our blood,
That we must curb it upon others' proof;
To be forbod the sweets that seem so good,
For fear of harms that preach in our behoof.
O appetite, from judgement stand aloof!
The one a palate hath that needs will taste,
Though Reason weep, and cry "It is thy last."

'For further I could say "This man 's untrue,"
And knew the patterns of his foul beguiling;
Heard where his plants in others' orchards grew,

164. *forbod*, forbidden (O.E. *forboden*).

Saw how deceits were gilded in his smiling;
Knew vows were ever brokers to defiling;
Thought characters and words merely but art,
And bastards of his foul adulterate heart.

'And long upon these terms I held my city,
Till thus he gan besiege me: "Gentle maid,
Have of my suffering youth some feeling pity,
And be not of my holy vows afraid:
That 's to ye sworn to none was ever said;
For feasts of love I have been call'd unto,
Till now did ne'er invite, nor never woo.

'"All my offences that abroad you see
Are errors of the blood, none of the mind;
Love made them not: with acture they may be,
Where neither party is nor true nor kind:
They sought their shame that so their shame did find;
And so much less of shame in me remains,
By how much of me their reproach contains.

'"Among the many that mine eyes have seen,
Not one whose flame my heart so much as warm'd,
Or my affection put to the smallest teen,
Or any of my leisures ever charm'd:
Harm have I done to them, but ne'er was harm'd;
Kept hearts in liveries, but mine own was free,
And reign'd, commanding in his monarchy.

'"Look here, what tributes wounded fancies sent me,
Of paled pearls and rubies red as blood;
Figuring that they their passions likewise lent me
Of grief and blushes, aptly understood
In bloodless white and the encrimson'd mood;

185. *acture*, action.

Effects of terror and dear modesty,
Encamp'd in hearts, but fighting outwardly.

'"And, lo, behold these talents of their hair,
With twisted metal amorously impleach'd,
I have received from many a several fair,
Their kind acceptance weepingly beseech'd,
With the annexions of fair gems enrich'd,
And deep-brain'd sonnets that did amplify
Each stone's dear nature, worth, and quality.

'"The diamond,—why, 'twas beautiful and hard
(Whereto his invised properties did tend);
The deep-green emerald, in whose fresh regard
Weak sights their sickly radiance do amend;
The heaven-hued sapphire and the opal blend
With objects manifold: each several stone,
With wit well blazon'd, smiled or made some moan.

'"Lo, all these trophies of affections hot,
Of pensived and subdued desires the tender,
Nature hath charged me that I hoard them not,
But yield them up where I myself must render,
That is, to you, my origin and ender;
For these, of force, must your oblations be,
Since I their altar, you enpatron me.

'"O, then, advance of yours that phraseless hand,
Whose white weighs down the airy scale of praise;
Take all these similes to your own command,
Hallow'd with sighs that burning lungs did raise;
What me your minister, for you obeys,
Works under you; and to your audit comes
Their distract parcels in combined sums.

205. *impleach'd*, entwined.
212. *invised*; perhaps unseen, inward.
225. *phraseless*, beyond expression.

'"Lo, this device was sent me from a nun,
Or sister sanctified, of holiest note;
Which late her noble suit in court did shun,
Whose rarest havings made the blossoms dote;
For she was sought by spirits of richest coat,
But kept cold distance, and did thence remove,
To spend her living in eternal love.

'"But, O my sweet, what labour is't to leave
The thing we have not, mastering what not strives,
Playing the place which did no form receive,
Playing patient sports in unconstrained gyves?
She that her fame so to herself contrives,
The scars of battle 'scapeth by the flight,
And makes her absence valiant, not her might.

'"O, pardon me, in that my boast is true:
The accident which brought me to her eye
Upon the moment did her force subdue,
And now she would the caged cloister fly:
Religious love put out Religion's eye:
Not to be tempted, would she be immured,
And now, to tempt, all liberty procured.

'"How mighty then you are, O, hear me tell!
The broken bosoms that to me belong
Have emptied all their fountains in my well,
And mine I pour your ocean all among:
I strong o'er them, and you o'er me being strong,
Must for your victory us all congest,
As compound love to physic your cold breast.

'"My parts had power to charm a sacred nun,
Who, disciplined, ay, dieted in grace,
Believed her eyes when they to assail begun,

241. *Playing*, a typographical error; 'paling' has been suggested.

All vows and consecrations giving place:
O most potential love! vow, bond, nor space,
In thee hath neither sting, knot, nor confine,
For thou art all, and all things else are thine.

'"When thou impressest, what are precepts worth
Of stale example? When thou wilt inflame,
How coldly those impediments stand forth
Of wealth, of filial fear, law, kindred, fame!
Love's arms are peace, 'gainst rule, 'gainst sense, 'gainst shame,
And sweetens, in the suffering pangs it bears,
The aloes of all forces, shocks, and fears.

'"Now all these hearts that do on mine depend
Feeling it break, with bleeding groans they pine;
And supplicant their sighs to you extend,
To leave the battery that you make 'gainst mine,
Lending soft audience to my sweet design,
And credent soul to that strong-bonded oath
That shall prefer and undertake my troth."

'This said, his watery eyes he did dismount,
Whose sights till then were levell'd on my face;
Each cheek a river running from a fount
With brinish current downward flow'd apace:
O, how the channel to the stream gave grace!
Who glazed with crystal gate the glowing roses
That flame through water which their hue encloses.

'O father, what a hell of witchcraft lies
In the small orb of one particular tear!
But with the inundation of the eyes
What rocky heart to water will not wear?
What breast so cold that is not warmed here?

O cleft effect! cold modesty, hot wrath,
Both fire from hence and chill extincture hath.

'For, lo, his passion, but an art of craft,
Even there resolved my reason into tears;
There my white stole of chastity I daff'd,
Shook off my sober guards and civil fears;
Appear to him, as he to me appears,
All melting; though our drops this difference bore,
His poison'd me, and mine did him restore.

'In him a plenitude of subtle matter,
Applied to cautels, all strange forms receives,
Of burning blushes, or of weeping water,
Or swooning paleness; and he takes and leaves,
In either's aptness, as it best deceives,
To blush at speeches rank, to weep at woes,
Or to turn white and swoon at tragic shows:

'That not a heart which in his level came
Could 'scape the hail of his all-hurting aim,
Showing fair nature is both kind and tame;
And, veil'd in them, did win whom he would maim:
Against the thing he sought he would exclaim;
When he most burn'd in heart-wish'd luxury,
He preach'd pure maid, and praised cold chastity.

'Thus merely with the garment of a Grace
The naked and concealed fiend he cover'd;
That th' unexperient gave the tempter place,
Which like a cherubin above them hover'd.
Who, young and simple, would not be so lover'd?
Ay me! I fell; and yet do question make
What I should do again for such a sake.

303. *cautels*, deceits.

'O, that infected moisture of his eye,
O, that false fire which in his cheek so glow'd,
O, that forced thunder from his heart did fly,
O, that sad breath his spongy lungs bestow'd,
O, all that borrow'd motion seeming owed,
Would yet again betray the fore-betray'd,
And new pervert a reconciled maid!'

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM

INTRODUCTION

THIS miscellany appeared in 1599, with the following title :—

THE | PASSIONATE | PILGRIME. | *By W. Shakespeare.* | AT LONDON. | Printed for W. Jaggard, and are | to be sold by W. Leake, at the Grey-|hound in Paules Churchyard. | 1599.

A new edition appeared in 1612, with additions derived from Thomas Heywood, and a modified title :—

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIME | or | *Certaine Amorous Sonnets,* | *betweene* Venus *and* Adonis, | *newly corrected and aug-|mented.* | By W. Shakespere. | The third Edition. Whereunto is newly ad-|ded two Loue-Epistles, the first from *Paris* to *Hellen,* and | *Hellen's* answere backe | again to *Paris.*

In the course of the same year, Thomas Heywood complained in the dedicatory epistle prefixed to his *Apology for Astus,* of the 'manifest injury' done him, as well as to Shakespeare, by this surreptitious publication : whereupon Jaggard printed a new title-page omitting Shakespeare's name. In Malone's copy (now in the Bodleian) the old title-page, by an inadvertence, was retained when the new was added.

A third edition, still further enlarged from equally unauthentic sources, appeared in 1640.

The contents even of the first edition show that

the book was a miscellany, raked together by fair means or foul and floated with the great name,—already, as we may judge from Meres' tribute, at the head of English letters,—to which not more than five of the twenty-one pieces (viz. I, II, III, V, XVII) can certainly be ascribed. Three of the other pieces, however, though they had no right to their place, were not unworthy of it,—those by Barnfield (VIII, XXI) and by Marlowe (XX).

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM

I

When my love swears that she is made of truth,
I do believe her, though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
Unskilful in the world's false forgeries.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although I know my years be past the best,
I smiling credit her false-speaking tongue,
Outfacing faults in love with love's ill rest.
But wherefore says my love that she is young?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O, love's best habit is a soothing tongue,
And age, in love, loves not to have years told.
Therefore I 'll lie with love, and love with me,
Since that our faults in love thus smother'd be.

II

Two loves I have, of comfort and despair,
That like two spirits do suggest me still;
My better angel is a man right fair,
My worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.
To win me soon to hell, my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
Wooing his purity with her fair pride.

i. and ii. are Shakespeare's Sonnets cxxxviii. and cxliv. with certain verbal alterations.

And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend,
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell:
For being both to me, both to each friend,
I guess one angel in another's hell:
The truth I shall not know, but live in doubt,
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

III

Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye,
'Gainst whom the world could not hold argument,
Persuade my heart to this false perjury?
Vows for thee broke deserve not punishment.
A woman I forswore; but I will prove,
Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love;
Thy grace being gain'd cures all disgrace in me.
My vow was breath, and breath a vapour is;
Then, thou fair sun, that on this earth doth shine,
Exhale this vapour vow; in thee it is:
If broken, then it is no fault of mine.
If by me broke, what fool is not so wise
To break an oath, to win a paradise?

IV

Sweet Cytherea, sitting by a brook
With young Adonis, lovely, fresh, and green,
Did court the lad with many a lovely look,
Such looks as none could look but beauty's queen.
She told him stories to delight his ear,
She show'd him favours to allure his eye;
To win his heart, she touch'd him here and there;
Touches so soft still conquer chastity.

iii. This is Longaville's sonnet to Maria, *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 60 f., also with verbal alterations.

11. *Exhale*, draw up (as the sun draws vapour from the earth).

iv. Possibly a sonnet of Shakespeare upon Venus and Adonis, as also vi. and ix.

1. *Cytherea*, Venus.

But whether unripe years did want conceit,
Or he refused to take her figured proffer,
The tender nibbler would not touch the bait,
But smile and jest at every gentle offer:
Then fell she on her back, fair queen, and toward:
He rose and ran away; ah, fool too froward!

V

If love make me forsworn, how shall I swear to love?
O never faith could hold, if not to beauty vow'd:
Though to myself forsworn, to thee I 'll constant prove;
Those thoughts, to me like oaks, to thee like osiers bow'd.
Study his bias leaves, and make his book thine eyes,
Where all those pleasures live that art can comprehend.
If knowledge be the mark, to know thee shall suffice;
Well learned is that tongue that well can thee commend;
All ignorant that soul that sees thee without wonder;
Which is to me some praise, that I thy parts admire:
Thine eye Jove's lightning seems, thy voice his dreadful thunder,
Which, not to anger bent, is music and sweet fire.
Celestial as thou art, O do not love that wrong,
To sing heaven's praise with such an earthly tongue.

VI

Scarce had the sun dried up the dewy morn,
And scarce the herd gone to the hedge for shade,

v. Biron's sonnet to Rosaline, *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 2. 109 f.

When Cytherea, all in love forlorn,
A longing tarriance for Adonis made
Under an osier growing by a brook,
A brook where Adon used to cool his spleen:
Hot was the day; she hotter that did look
For his approach, that often there had been.
Anon he comes, and throws his mantle by,
And stood stark naked on the brook's green brim:
The sun look'd on the world with glorious eye,
Yet not so wistly as this queen on him.
He, spying her, bounced in, whereas he stood:
'O Jove,' quoth she, 'why was not I a flood!'

VII

Fair is my love, but not so fair as fickle,
Mild as a dove, but neither true nor trusty,
Brighter than glass and yet, as glass is, brittle;
Softer than wax and yet as iron rusty:
A lily pale, with damask dye to grace her,
None fairer, nor none falser to deface her.

Her lips to mine how often hath she joined,
Between each kiss her oaths of true love swearing!
How many tales to please me hath she coined,
Dreading my love, the loss thereof still fearing!
Yet in the midst of all her pure protestings,
Her faith, her oaths, her tears, and all were jestings.

She burn'd with love, as straw with fire flameth;
She burn'd out love, as soon as straw out-burneth;
She framed the love, and yet she foil'd the framing;
She bade love last, and yet she fell a-turning.
Was this a lover, or a lecher whether?
Bad in the best, though excellent in neither.

vi. 12. *wistly*, attentively. vii. Possibly Shakespeare's.

VIII

If music and sweet poetry agree,
As they must needs, the sister and the brother,
Then must the love be great 'twixt thee and me,
Because thou lovest the one, and I the other.
Dowland to thee is dear, whose heavenly touch
Upon the lute doth ravish human sense;
Spenser to me, whose deep conceit is such
As passing all conceit needs no defence.
Thou lovest to hear the sweet melodious sound
That Phœbus' lute, the queen of music, makes;
And I in deep delight am chiefly drown'd
Whenas himself to singing he betakes.
One god is god of both, as poets feign;
One knight loves both, and both in thee remain.

IX

Fair was the morn when the fair queen of love,
* * * * * *
Paler for sorrow than her milk-white dove,
For Adon's sake, a youngster proud and wild;
Her stand she takes upon a steep-up hill:
Anon Adonis comes with horn and hounds;
She, silly queen, with more than love's good will,
Forbade the boy he should not pass those grounds:
'Once,' quoth she, 'did I see a fair sweet youth

viii. Probably by Richard Barnfield. It had already appeared in his *Poems in Divers Humors*, 1598.

5. *Dowland;* John Dowland, lutenist to the King of Denmark, who set many Elizabethan songs to music, and with Alfonso Ferrabosco furnished the music for several of Ben Jonson's Masques. His Song-Books, issued in 1597, 1600, and 1603, furnished much material to Mr. Bullen's well-known selections (*Lyrics from Elizabethan Song-Books*).

8. *conceit*, imagination.

14. *One knight loves both.* Probably Sir George Carey, K.G., to whom Dowland dedicated his first book of airs (1597). His wife, daughter of Sir John Spencer of Althorpe, was a great friend of Spenser. L.

Here in these brakes deep-wounded with a boar,
Deep in the thigh, a spectacle of ruth!
See, in my thigh,' quoth she, 'here was the sore.'
She showed hers: he saw more wounds than one,
And blushing fled, and left her all alone.

X

Sweet rose, fair flower, untimely pluck'd, soon vaded,
Pluck'd in the bud and vaded in the spring!
Bright orient pearl, alack, too timely shaded!
Fair creature, kill'd too soon by death's sharp sting!
Like a green plum that hangs upon a tree,
And falls, through wind, before the fall should be.

I weep for thee, and yet no cause I have;
For why thou left'st me nothing in thy will:
And yet thou left'st me more than I did crave;
For why I craved nothing of thee still:
O yes, dear friend, I pardon crave of thee,
Thy discontent thou didst bequeath to me.

XI

Venus, with young Adonis sitting by her
Under a myrtle shade, began to woo him:
She told the youngling how god Mars did try her,
And as he fell to her, so fell she to him.
'Even thus,' quoth she, 'the warlike god embraced me,'
And then she clipp'd Adonis in her arms;
'Even thus,' quoth she, 'the warlike god unlaced me,'
As if the boy should use like loving charms;

x. Probably not Shakespeare's.
1. *vaded*, faded; a Southern provincialism which recurs in xiii.

xi. This had appeared, with considerable variations, in Bartholomew Griffin's *Fidessa more Chaste than Kinde* (a sequence of sixty-two sonnets), 1596; it is probably his work.

'Even thus,' quoth she, 'he seized on my lips,'
And with her lips on his did act the seizure:
And as she fetched breath, away he skips,
And would not take her meaning nor her pleasure.
Ah, that I had my lady at this bay,
To kiss and clip me till I run away!

XII

Crabbed age and youth cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance, age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn, age like winter weather;
Youth like summer brave, age like winter bare.
Youth is full of sport, age's breath is short;
Youth is nimble, age is lame;
Youth is hot and bold, age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild, and age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee; youth, I do adore thee;
O, my love, my love is young!
Age, I do defy thee: O, sweet shepherd, hie thee,
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

XIII

Beauty is but a vain and doubtful good;
A shining gloss that vadeth suddenly;
A flower that dies when first it gins to bud;
A brittle glass that 's broken presently:
A doubtful good, a gloss, a glass, a flower,
Lost, vaded, broken, dead within an hour.

And as goods lost are seld or never found,
As vaded gloss no rubbing will refresh,
As flowers dead lie wither'd on the ground,
As broken glass no cément can redress,
So beauty blemish'd once 's for ever lost,
In spite of physic, painting, pain and cost.

13. *at this bay*, in my power.
xii. Worthy of Shakespeare, but not very like him.
xiii. Probably by the author of x.

XIV

Good night, good rest. Ah, neither be my share:
She bade good night that kept my rest away;
And daff'd me to a cabin hang'd with care,
To descant on the doubts of my decay.
'Farewell,' quoth she, 'and come again to-morrow:'
Fare well I could not, for I supp'd with sorrow.

Yet at my parting sweetly did she smile,
In scorn or friendship, nill I construe whether:
'T may be, she joy'd to jest at my exile,
'T may be, again to make me wander thither:
'Wander,' a word for shadows like myself,
As take the pain, but cannot pluck the pelf.

XV

Lord, how mine eyes throw gazes to the east!
My heart doth charge the watch; the morning rise
Doth cite each moving sense from idle rest.
Not daring trust the office of mine eyes,
While Philomela sits and sings, I sit and mark,
And wish her lays were tuned like the lark;

For she doth welcome daylight with her ditty,
And drives away dark dismal-dreaming night:
The night so pack'd, I post unto my pretty;
Heart hath his hope, and eyes their wished sight;
Sorrow changed to solace, solace mix'd with sorrow;
For why, she sigh'd and bade me come to-morrow.

xiv. xv. Probably not Shakespeare's.

xiv. 3. *daff'd me*, sent me away.

12. *As*, which.

xv. 2. *charge*, accuse.

9. *pack'd*, gone.

Were I with her, the night would post too soon;
But now are minutes added to the hours;
To spite me now, each minute seems a moon;
Yet not for me, shine sun to succour flowers!
Pack night, peep day; good day, of night now borrow:
Short, night, to-night, and length thyself to-morrow.

XVI

It was a lording's daughter, the fairest one of three,
That liked of her master as well as well might be,
Till looking on an Englishman, the fair'st that eye could see,
Her fancy fell a-turning.
Long was the combat doubtful that love with love did fight,
To leave the master loveless, or kill the gallant knight:
To put in practice either, alas, it was a spite
Unto the silly damsel!
But one must be refused; more mickle was the pain
That nothing could be used to turn them both to gain,
For of the two the trusty knight was wounded with disdain:
Alas, she could not help it!
Thus art with arms contending was victor of the day,
Which by a gift of learning did bear the maid away:
Then, lullaby, the learned man hath got the lady gay;
For now my song is ended.

XVII

On a day, alack the day!
Love, whose month was ever May,

xvi. Not by Shakespeare.
2. *master*, teacher.
xvii. Dumain's song to the 'most divine Kate, with trifling verbal alterations, *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 100.

Spied a blossom passing fair,
Playing in the wanton air:
Through the velvet leaves the wind,
All unseen, gan passage find;
That the lover, sick to death,
Wish'd himself the heaven's breath,
'Air,' quoth he, 'thy cheeks may blow;
Air, would I might triumph so!
But, alas! my hand hath sworn
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn:
Vow, alack! for youth unmeet:
Youth, so apt to pluck a sweet.
Thou for whom Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiope were;
And deny himself for Jove,
Turning mortal for thy love.'

XVIII

My flocks feed not,
My ewes breed not,
My rams speed not,
All is amiss:
Love's denying,
Faith's defying,
Heart's renying,
Causer of this.
All my merry jigs are quite forgot,
All my lady's love is lost, God wot:
Where her faith was firmly fix'd in love,
There a nay is placed without remove.
One silly cross
Wrought all my loss;
O frowning Fortune, cursed, fickle dame!

xviii. Published in Weelkes' *Madrigals*, 1597, and reprinted in *England's Helicon*, 1600, with the signature 'Ignoto.'
7. *renying*, disowning.
13. *cross*, accident, mischance.

For now I see
Inconstancy
  More in women than in men remain.

In black mourn I,
All fears scorn I,
Love hath forlorn me,
  Living in thrall:
Heart is bleeding,
All help needing,
O cruel speeding,
  Fraughted with gall.
My shepherd's pipe can sound no deal;
My wether's bell rings doleful knell;
My curtail dog, that wont to have play'd,
Plays not at all, but seems afraid;
My sighs so deep
Procure to weep,
  In howling wise, to see my doleful plight.
How sighs resound
Through heartless ground,
  Like a thousand vanquish'd men in bloody
    fight!

Clear wells spring not,
Sweet birds sing not,
Green plants bring not
  Forth their dye;
Herds stand weeping,
Flocks all sleeping,
Nymphs back peeping
  Fearfully:
All our pleasure known to us poor swains,
All our merry meetings on the plains,
All our evening sport from us is fled,

27. *no deal*, nothing. 32. *Procure*, contrive.

All our love is lost, for Love is dead.
Farewell, sweet lass,
Thy like ne'er was
  For a sweet content, the cause of all my moan:
Poor Corydon
Must live alone;
  Other help for him I see that there is none.

XIX

When as thine eye hath chose the dame,
And stall'd the deer that thou shouldst strike,
Let reason rule things worthy blame,
As well as fancy, partial wight:
  Take counsel of some wiser head,
  Neither too young nor yet unwed.

And when thou comest thy tale to tell,
Smooth not thy tongue with filed talk,
Lest she some subtle practice smell,—
A cripple soon can find a halt;—
  But plainly say thou lovest her well,
  And set thy person forth to sell.

What though her frowning brows be bent,
Her cloudy looks will calm ere night:
And then too late she will repent
That thus dissembled her delight;
  And twice desire, ere it be day,
  That which with scorn she put away.

What though she strive to try her strength,
And ban and brawl, and say thee nay,

xix. Possibly Shakespeare's.

2. *stall'd*, secured.

4. *fancy, partial wight*; Malone's conjecture for 'fancy (party all might).'

Her feeble force will yield at length,
When craft hath taught her thus to say;
'Had women been so strong as men,
In faith, you had not had it then.'

And to her will frame all thy ways;
Spare not to spend, and chiefly there
Where thy desert may merit praise,
By ringing in thy lady's ear:
The strongest castle, tower, and town,
The golden bullet beats it down.

Serve always with assured trust,
And in thy suit be humble true;
Unless thy lady prove unjust,
Press never thou to choose anew:
When time shall serve, be thou not slack
To proffer, though she put thee back.

The wiles and guiles that women work,
Dissembled with an outward show,
The tricks and toys that in them lurk,
The cock that treads them shall not know.
Have you not heard it said full oft,
A woman's nay doth stand for nought?

Think women still to strive with men,
To sin and never for to saint:
There is no heaven, by holy then,
When time with age doth them attaint.
Were kisses all the joys in bed,
One woman would another wed.

But, soft! enough,—too much, I fear—
Lest that my mistress hear my song:

45. *by holy then.* Many emendations have been proposed, but the line remains unsatisfactory. ['By holy!' is still a common exclamation in Ireland. L.]

She will not stick to round me i' the ear,
To teach my tongue to be so long:
Yet will she blush, here be it said,
To hear her secrets so bewray'd.

XX

Live with me, and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
And all the craggy mountains yields.

There will we sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers, by whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee a bed of roses,
With a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroider'd all with leaves of myrtle.

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs;
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Then live with me and be my love.

Love's Answer.

If that the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy love.

xx. By Marlowe. It was republished, with two more verses, over Marlowe's name in *England's Helicon*, 1600. The 'Answer,' probably composed by Sir Walter Raleigh 'in his young days,' first appeared complete in *England's Helicon*. In a famous passage of the *Compleat Angler*, Walton has given this Song and 'Answer' a setting as charming as themselves. 'Old-fashioned poetry, but choicely good.'

XXI

As it fell upon a day
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
Which a grove of myrtles made,
Beasts did leap, and birds did sing,
Trees did grow, and plants did spring;
Every thing did banish moan,
Save the nightingale alone:
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Lean'd her breast up-till a thorn,
And there sung the dolefull'st ditty,
That to hear it was great pity:
'Fie, fie, fie,' now would she cry;
'Tereu, tereu!' by and by;
That to hear her so complain,
Scarce I could from tears refrain;
For her griefs, so lively shown,
Made me think upon mine own.
Ah, thought I, thou mourn'st in vain!
None takes pity on thy pain:
Senseless trees they cannot hear thee;
Ruthless beasts they will not cheer thee:
King Pandion he is dead;
All thy friends are lapp'd in lead;
All thy fellow birds do sing,
Careless of thy sorrowing.
Even so, poor bird, like thee,
None alive will pity me.

xxi. By Richard Barnfield. It had already appeared in his *Poems in Divers Humors*, 1598. Verses 1-28 appeared in *England's Helicon*.

14. *Tereu;* an imitation of the nightingale's note, with an allusion to the legend of Philomela, whose persecutions by Tereus caused her transformation into a nightingale.

23. *Pandion*, the father of Philomela.

Whilst as fickle Fortune smiled,
Thou and I were both beguiled.
Every one that flatters thee
Is no friend in misery.
Words are easy, like the wind;
Faithful friends are hard to find:
Every man will be thy friend
Whilst thou hast wherewith to spend;
But if store of crowns be scant,
No man will supply thy want.
If that one be prodigal,
Bountiful they will him call,
And with such-like flattering,
'Pity but he were a king;'
If he be addict to vice,
Quickly him they will entice;
If to women he be bent,
They have at commandement:
But if Fortune once do frown,
Then farewell his great renown;
They that fawn'd on him before
Use his company no more.
He that is thy friend indeed,
He will help thee in thy need:
If thou sorrow, he will weep;
If thou wake, he cannot sleep;
Thus of every grief in heart
He with thee doth bear a part.
These are certain signs to know
Faithful friend from flattering foe.

THE PHŒNIX AND THE TURTLE

INTRODUCTION

THIS piece first appeared in a collection issued by Robert Chester, in 1601, with the title :—

'Love's Martyr; or Rosalin's Complaint. Allegorically shadowing the truth of Love, in the constant Fate of the Phœnix and Turtle. A Poem enterlaced with much Varietie and Raretie; now first translated out of the venerable Italian Torquato Cæliano, by Robert Chester. With the true legend of famous King Arthur, the last of the nine Worthies, being the first essay of a new British poet; collected out of diverse authentical Records. To these are added some new compositions, of several modern writers whose names are subscribed to their several works, upon the first subject: viz. the Phœnix and Turtle.'

The interest of the collection is confined to these additions, which include verses by Marston, Chapman, Ben Jonson, and Ignoto. They are introduced by a new title-page, which furnishes some fresh details :—

'Hereafter follow diverse poeticall Essaies on the former subject, viz. the Turtle and Phœnix. Done by the best and chiefest of our modern writers, with their names subscribed to their particular works: never before extant: And now first consecrated by them all generally to the love and merit of the true-

noble Knight, Sir John Salisburie. Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori. MDCI.'

The significance of this slight piece, which, as indicated, is signed in Shakespeare's full name, remains an unsolved problem; but its authenticity is generally accepted. It has the air of a trifle, thrown off perhaps at the urgency of a resolute Album-maker, whose hackneyed emblematics, allegorical mystifications, and Arthurian legend-lore can have had few attractions for the Shakespeare of 1600. Critics of repute have read high romance in these cloudy symbols; and Chester himself doubtless intended to convey a very serious meaning, whether it concerned the love-affairs of Elizabeth with Essex or another, or some private history to which we have no clue;[1] but the team of distinguished poets whom he persuaded to be yoked to his allegorical chariot regarded their enterprise, one surmises, as a pleasant jest, though they carried their parts through with appropriate decorum to the end.

[1] Dr. Grosart, in his valuable edition (*New Shaks. Soc.* 1878), ardently defends the Essex-theory. Mr. Lee has pointed out the resemblance between the symbolism of this poem and 'the parts figuratively played in Sidney's obsequies by turtle-dove, swan, phœnix, and eagle,' as described in Matthew Roydon's elegy on Sidney appended to Spenser's *Colin Clout's Come Home again*, 1595 (*W. Shakespeare*, p. 184).

THE PHŒNIX AND THE TURTLE

Let the bird of loudest lay,
On the sole Arabian tree,
Herald sad and trumpet be,
To whose sound chaste wings obey.

But thou shrieking harbinger,
Foul precurrer of the fiend,
Augur of the fever's end,
To this troop come thou not near!

From this session interdict
Every fowl of tyrant wing,
Save the eagle, feather'd king:
Keep the obsequy so strict.

Let the priest in surplice white,
That defunctive music can,
Be the death-divining swan,
Lest the requiem lack his right.

And thou treble-dated crow,
That thy sable gender makest
With the breath thou givest and takest,
'Mongst our mourners shalt thou go.

14. *can*, is accomplished in.
17. *treble-dated*, thrice as long-lived as man.
18. *gender*, race.

The Phœnix and the Turtle

Here the anthem doth commence:
Love and constancy is dead;
Phœnix and the turtle fled
In a mutual flame from hence.

So they loved, as love in twain
Had the essence but in one;
Two distincts, division none:
Number there in love was slain.

Hearts remote, yet not asunder;
Distance, and no space was seen
'Twixt the turtle and his queen:
But in them it were a wonder.

So between them love did shine,
That the turtle saw his right
Flaming in the phœnix' sight;
Either was the other's mine.

Property was thus appalled,
That the self was not the same;
Single nature's double name
Neither two nor one was called.

Reason, in itself confounded,
Saw division grow together,
To themselves yet either neither,
Simple were so well compounded,

That it cried, How true a twain
Seemeth this concordant one!
Love hath reason, reason none,
If what parts can so remain.

25. *as*, as if.
37. *Property*, individual nature, personal identity.

The Phœnix and the Turtle

Whereupon it made this threne
To the phœnix and the dove,
Co-supremes and stars of love,
As chorus to their tragic scene.

THRENOS.

Beauty, truth, and rarity,
Grace in all simplicity,
Here enclosed in cinders lie.

Death is now the phœnix' nest;
And the turtle's loyal breast
To eternity doth rest,

Leaving no posterity:
'Twas not their infirmity,
It was married chastity.

Truth may seem, but cannot be;
Beauty brag, but 'tis not she;
Truth and beauty buried be.

To this urn let those repair
That are either true or fair;
For these dead birds sigh a prayer.

49. *threne*, threnody, lamentation.

THE END